

A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN
SPHERES OF INFLUENCE IN LEICESTERSHIRE.

by

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A Thesis presented for the Degree of Ph.D. in
the Department of Geography at the University
of Birmingham, May, 1954.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The completion of this study would have been impossible without the kind co-operation of numerous individuals in many parts of the country.

The writer would wish to express his thanks to the assistants in the Birmingham reference library, the Leicester reference library, the library, newspaper library, and map library of the British Museum, the Public Record Office, and the Leicestershire County Record Office: ~~this~~ co-operation in producing books, papers, documents, and the like greatly facilitated the collation of various items of evidence.

Representatives of Local Government Authorities and National Government Departments have willingly made information available and have clarified many points in discussion and correspondence with the author. In particular, thanks must be extended to Mr. A.G. Powell, the North Midland regional research officer of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (formerly the Ministry of Town and Country Planning). His comments and suggestions made in the initial stages of this study proved invaluable, and the information pertaining to town-country relationships collated through his office, and which was very willingly made available to the writer for analysis, formed a sure foundation on which to base the present-day investigations.

Throughout Leicestershire people in many walks of life have spent much time and trouble in endeavouring to meet the requests -

sometimes, no doubt, seemingly obscure ones - of the writer for facts and figures. The people who have helped are too numerous to mention individually but thanks are especially due to firms of auctioneers in Leicester, Melton Mowbray and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, to the retail co-operative societies of the towns of the county, to retailers, cinema managements, newspaper proprietors, public transport operators, and many others who gave considerable assistance in the examination of the contemporary functions of the towns.

Finally, it remains to express the writer's appreciation to the staff of the Department of Geography at the University of Birmingham: to the members of the academic staff for their help and advice in matters of research technique: to Mr. D.W. Oliver and Mr. R. Swift, of the technical staff, for their co-operation in photographing the numerous maps and diagrams: and to the Head of the Department, Professor R.H. Kinvig, who, as supervisor of this thesis, has always been ready and willing to discuss, at length, matters concerning it, and to give such help and encouragement as was essential for its completion.

P.R.O.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N .

The study of urban spheres of influence has, for a good number of years, attracted the attention of both geographers and sociologists; a brief examination of their work will indicate exactly what they envisaged as forming part of the study.

In 1915 an American sociologist published a paper in which he examined the relationships existing between twelve service centres and their rural neighbourhoods in Walworth County in the state of Wisconsin.⁽¹⁾ This early pragmatic approach to the relationship of town and country was soon to be matched by a more general statement of the factors involved, in the Presidential address given to the Association of American Geographers in 1917.

"Extended investigations of cities and their relation to the land shows the essential unity of city and country. It is a wholly mistaken conception which attempts to separate them. Any group of close living people who are mainly occupied with the elaborating and the exchange of products rather than their direct production from the earth, whether it be a few houses at the cross roads, a town, a city, or a metropolis, is the centre of activities that involve areas far beyond the immediate neighbourhood..... The village

(1) (Galpin C.G. The Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community. Research Bulletin No. 34. Agricultural Experimental Station. University of Wisconsin. 1915)

and city workers are engaged in tasks that aid and prosper life in the country. Government functions centre there and all sorts of agents with delegated powers, but the work is for the city and country people alike. The ploughing of country furrows, the ploughing of country crops, the milking of country cows, is of vital interest to the great city, and is motivated by events that take place in the city. The city is the creature of the country and cannot live without it.... A great country population cannot live today without bringing cities into existence."⁽ⁱ⁾

In this very clear statement of the functional relationship between town and country not only was their mutual inter-dependence recognised but, in addition, Jefferson also saw the existence of a hierarchy of service centres from the few houses at the cross roads right up to the metropolis. Both these concepts were to be elaborated upon in later years.

In this country it was the work of Dickinson in the late 1920's which brought town-country relationships into the scope of geographical studies. From case studies of Bradford and Leeds and of the smaller urban settlements of East Anglia⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ he proceeded to elaborate on the general relationships. He

-
- (i) (Jefferson, M. Some Considerations of the Geographical Provinces of the United States. Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. 7. 1917. p.3.)
- (ii) (Dickinson, R.E. Regional Functions and Zones of Influence of Leeds and Bradford. Geography 15.1930.p.548. The Distribution & Functions of the Smaller Urban Settlements of East Anglia. Geography, 17. 1932. p.19.)

referred to urban settlement in a rural area as "essentially a local focus of human life and activities, commercial, industrial, administrative, and cultural."⁽ⁱ⁾

In a later work Dickinson went on to expand his concept of the ideas previously but briefly expressed. He argues:

"If a region be regarded as a geographical association of human space relationships, then such a region may be defined from many points of view; as an area with the same type of farming, the same type of industrial structure, the same type of culture or language, the chief factor in the integration of the life and organisation of society into such regional associations remains the settlement centre be it the village, the town, or the great city. The analysis of the functions of these centres, and the areas which they serve, provides the framework for the study of the regionalisation of society.... While it involves, above all, what are commonly regarded as economic circulations, it also embraces social, cultural, and political associations viewed in the light of their historical development.... A region as defined or conceived on this basis is an area of inter-related activities, kindred interests, and common organisations, brought into being through the medium of the routes that bind it to the urban centre."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (ibid. p.21)

(ii) (Dickinson R.E. City, Region, and Regionalism. London. 1947. p.11.)

Elsewhere in the book Dickinson had stated that the space grouping of nucleated settlement together with its surrounding tributary area "which acquired homogeneity through the welding force of the centre" is a 'fundamental characteristic of society that has received but fleeting attention in this country.'⁽ⁱ⁾

In papers more specifically dedicated to aspects of physical planning the same author returned again to this theme. For example, in his contribution to one book, he writes:

"The conception of the community unit is essentially a geographical conception for such a unit, be it the small social unit of the region, is a geographical area with a considerable measure of unity in its services and organisation. The hierarchy of community units is not to be thought of as a theoretical mosaic.... It exists in the fabric of our society, and the geographical anatomy of this society must be thoroughly analysed so as to discover and rectify its maladjustments, and elaborate principles of planning in accordance with its needs."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The unity of town and country, in addition to being recognised in theory, was now also considered of importance in remodelling the spatial structure of society; we shall return to this theme later in the chapter.

Contemporary with the work of Dickinson on the relations between town and country other workers, both in this country

(i) (ibid. Preface p.xiii)

(ii) (Dickinson R.E. 'Ecology' in Physical Planning, Ed. by McCallum. Aberdeen 1944. p.103)

and abroad, were contributing the results of their thoughts and investigations to the literature on the topic. In Germany, W. Christaller made extensive and intensive studies in the south of the country and in 1932 published his results.⁽ⁱ⁾

In 1935 two American Sociologists brought out a monograph on rural social trends following investigations into town-country relationships in many parts of the United States.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

In 1939 the eminent British sociologist, Professor A.W. Ashby, contributed a paper on the 'Effects of Urban Growth on the Countryside' in which he made the following comment on the relations between town and country,

"In considering relations between town and country we are always concerned with the inflow and outflow of goods, services, knowledge, and ideas, and the means of transport by which these interchanges occur."⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

He went on to detail the kind of exchanges such as one might expect with towns of different status. As far as the small market towns were concerned he saw that:

"It will be the source of many common necessities of life for most of the families in its area.... It may be the centre for minor administrative activities.... it may be the centre of higher education of the secondary school type.... It will not develop any tensions between its

(i) (Christaller W. Die Zentralen Orte in Suddeutschland. Jena 1932.)

(ii) (Brunner, E.de S. and Kolb, J.H. Rural Social Trends. New York. 1935)

(iii) (Ashby A.W. The Effects of Urban Growth on the Countryside. Sociological Review. Vol. 31. 1939. p.345)

population and that of the rural area."⁽ⁱ⁾

In this case Ashby recognised the unity of interests between the population of the town and its environment and implied, therefore, that they should be treated as a single unit for all purposes. He recognised the same inherent tendency in connection with the county towns.

"With the coming of the motor-bus and car the county town has developed its connections with the county area and has extended its general influences, while recent developments in local government and administration raise its importance whilst tending to diminish that of the smaller market towns... The county town is the seat of culture.... it provides educational leadership.... it is the centre of organisation for specifically agricultural or rural associations.... The county town will be the seat of justice at several of its levels."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

In these two cases the interests of town and country are indisputably inter-twined. In a third case, however, Ashby pointed out that interests are much less close and may even be antagonistic.

"The mining or other single industry town quite frequently develops tensions between its population and that of the rural neighbourhood.... This type of town is generally unattractive, it is often a poor shopping centre, its dominating group of population has little or no sense of

(i) (ibid. p.346)
(ii) (ibid. p.348)

dependence on the countryside.... there is a conflict of social attitudes and values between the urban and the rural groups."⁽ⁱ⁾

Surely here is a note of warning to those who would always see the town as a centre of the centralised services for a surrounding area of greater or lesser extent. Recognising that this country is no longer primarily an agricultural one, with a uniform system of service centres, Ashby does remind us to bear in mind the industrial towns which have developed in the countryside but not of it, and to judge on an 'ad hoc' basis their relationships to the environment in which they are located.

A.E. Smailes has reminded us that mere size and local government status are inadequate measures of urban importance, and that in looking for more satisfactory criteria it is ~~is~~ necessary to look at the essential functions of towns and the institutions by which they are carried out. Smailes recognised a wide variety of functions:

"Urban centres act as the collecting and marketing points for the products of the surrounding area and as distributing centres for goods from outside; as centres for the provision of educational, health, recreational, and cultural services; and as crystallising points of local and regional feeling and thought as well as transmitters and disseminators of information."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (ibid. p.347)

(ii) (Smailes A.E. The Urban Hierarchy in England and Wales. Geography, 1944. Vol. 29. p.41.)

This definition brings out clearly the two way interdependence between town and country; a factor which must be borne closely in mind in detailed case studies.

E. Kant, the Swedish geographer, contrasted formal and functional divisions of a territory; the former representing homogeneous areas and the latter representing centralised units "often consisting of heterogeneous physiographical areas, but making up economic and social regions which have an internal differentiation which depends neither on natural factors nor on homogeneous landscapes.... It is rather a question of centralised regions based on spatial relations."⁽ⁱ⁾ Kant goes on to suggest that the unification of an area brought about by the common attraction of a town or city (i.e. a functional area) is more real than an area delimited by virtue of its like physical or economic interests.

In the past few years several surveys etc. concerned with the future welfare of the country, and more especially with the future of its rural parts, have all included comments on the concept of the central town or village and their accompanying spheres of influence.

The report of the Scott ~~Commission~~^{Committee} had significant observations on the fabric of rural society as reflected in the hierarchy of service centres and their accompanying service areas.

(i) (Kant E. Umland Studies and Sector Analysis. Lund Studies in Geography. Lund, Sweden. 1951)

"The villages provide a local centre and cater for many needs of agriculture. Their tradesmen such as the butcher, the grocer, and the innkeeper, and their craftsmen such as the blacksmith, the saddler, the jobbing builder, serve the farmers and cottagers who are scattered in the surrounding countryside; their churches, chapels and schools provide for the spiritual and some of their non-material needs.... As scattered farms are grouped round villages, so villages are grouped round market towns, which form the main commercial and, to some extent, the main cultural centres of the districts." (i)

In a planning survey of Herefordshire the position and importance of the market towns was very closely analysed and described.

"In addition to serving as a market centre and as a source of many necessities for the agricultural industry, the market town plays an important part as a shopping centre for rural families living within its sphere of influence.... Interdependence of town and country is not peculiar to the retail services alone: it extends through all branches of social and economic life and is nowhere more marked than in the case of professional and other social services...

Finally market towns serve as recreational and entertainment centres." (ii)

(i) (Royal Commission on Land Use in Rural Areas. 1941/2. Cmd. 6378. Paragraph. 39.)

(ii) (West Midland Group. English County. A Planning Survey of Herefordshire; London 1946. p.206)

A study of spheres of influence must take all these various factors and services into consideration if an attempt to secure a picture of reality is made.

Looking at the problem from rather a different point of view; from the point of view of the importance to a town of its hinterland, town-country relations were described as follows:

"The influence of a central town over its surrounding agricultural area is a factor of prime importance to the future of the nation.... The most practical solution to make urban progress more accessible to the country people is to link countryside with city more effectively by means of transport services.... To be a real social centre for the surrounding area, a town should offer a very wide variety of services each of which helps the other in attracting the countryman. The main functions which fall to a city, within its sphere of influence, are firstly, as an absorbent of labour, secondly, as a marketing and distribution centre, thirdly, as a centre for specialised social and professional services, and, fourthly, as an educational and entertainment centre." (i)

Once again we find emphasised the diverse nature of the services which a central place must provide to its dependent area. In an agricultural region these services will all be sought in the same settlement, probably the only one which is accessible from a number of villages. In an industrialised

(i) (University of Birmingham, Dept. of Commerce. County Town. A Civic Survey of Worcester. London 1946. p.117)

or semi-industrialised area the relationships will not be so straight-forward. The service centres will probably still provide the whole range of services, for they will be needed to supply the wants of the locally resident population, but one of the centres may develop one of the services to a more considerable extent than its neighbouring towns, and therefore, the sphere of influence of this particular settlement for this particular service will be inflated to more than normal size. Such a feature, of course, will severely complicate the picture of town-country relationships but it must necessarily be sorted out if the picture of reality, for which we aim, is to be achieved.

Reference has been made on several occasions to the concept of the "Urban Hierarchy". It does, in fact, form an integral part of any study of urban spheres of influence. Jefferson, as mentioned previously, recognised the existence of a hierarchy extending from the houses at the cross roads to the metropolis.⁽ⁱ⁾ In his work on East Anglia, Dickinson was able to divide settlements into three functional groups according to the centralised services which they offered; his rural villages were principally agricultural but with a few non-agricultural inhabitants to meet the needs of the parish: in the urban villages there was a larger proportion of workers engaged in retail trades and handicrafts; and finally in the towns, a greater variety of services was offered including

(i) See above. p. 2.)

distinct commercial and cultural elements. He was able to recognise four distinct gradings of the towns depending on the presence or absence of certain specific indicators or urban status.⁽ⁱ⁾

In a similar manner A.E. Smailes was able to suggest a hierarchy of towns within England and Wales on the basis of an examination of the services which they provide. He suggested the importance of a group of banks as an indicator of commercial importance; he suggested that the existence of a local weekly newspaper usually gave a rough indication of the town's importance as a district centre with educational, health and cultural facilities; he gave, as other typical features of towns, the presence of a representative range of professional people, of branch insurance offices, of the more highly specialised retail businesses, and the existence of local district seats of various departments of the central government. He recognised the existence of sub-towns which lacked some of the features and below the sub-towns, in the scale of importance, appeared the urban villages; and higher up the scale than the towns themselves, were the major towns, the cities, and the regional centres, again recognised according to the facilities which they possessed and provided.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Thus has the hierarchy of service centres been observed and described. The development of the hierarchy has been a

(i) (Dickinson R.E. Smaller Urban Settlements of East Anglia.
op. cit. p.25)

(ii) (Smailes A.E. op. cit. p.41)

recent phenomenon:

"Before the industrial revolution when the towns were chiefly marketing centres for the handicrafts and the farm produce of the surrounding countryside, the centralised services were especially important in determining the size and the spacing of towns. Then the market town was the seat of services for an area within about one hour's journey by road.... But in the last 100 years the increasing number and complexity of the centralised services, the improvement of roads and vehicles, as well as the great growth of industry and population have occasioned the concentration of many such services in fewer centres.... Thus there emerges a hierarchy of towns, graded according to the degree of concentration of centralised services." (i)

The several factors which have given rise to this hierarchy have not resulted in a straight-forward picture of distribution. Christaller, working on a theoretical basis, drew up a scheme of the distribution of service centres in which he theorised that towns of equal importance will be equally spaced from each other, competing in the intersecting border zones with centres of lower status which will supply certain needs more efficiently than the larger centres. Thus one of the more important centres will be surrounded on the periphery of its service area by six equally spaced centres

(i) Dickinson R.E. City, Region, and Regionalism. op.cit. p.31-32.)

of a lower order; and each of these, in a like manner will be surrounded by still smaller and less important centres. On this theoretical basis, therefore, towns will be equally spaced, in different orders, with varying hexagonally-shaped market areas. However, many other factors contribute to the distribution of towns and hence to the distribution of service centres. Referring to this, Dickinson wrote:

"The fundamental and universal control exercised by services on the functional character, distribution, and size of towns is only one determining factor. Even in areas not greatly affected by the growth of urban industrial populations it is modified by such other factors as the relief of the land, the location of routes and river crossings, the distribution of uninhabited land, and the political and economic circumstances of the early medieval development of the towns."⁽ⁱ⁾

In view of the many factors involved in determining the hierarchy of the urban centres there would appear little justification for a theoretical concept which cannot possibly take them all into account or give due weight to the more important.

The concepts of the urban hierarchy and the spheres of influence or hinterlands associated with the urban centres at their different levels have received, therefore, analysis sufficient to indicate that further detailed investigation is

(i) (ibid. p.32.)

justified. In some instances theories have been postulated and then facts sought to prove them; in other instances investigations have preceded any attempt to draw conclusions, and in view of the nature of these studies it would appear that this method is the most logical manner of approach. 'Human space relationships', as the study has been termed, implies the hand and mind of man at work in their determination and, as we are perhaps only too painfully aware in other fields of his activities, man does not always act in the most rational way one would expect, thus necessitating a study based on observable facts. In addition, as a previous quotation showed, a theory of the urban hierarchy, such as Christaller's, could only be relevant where factors of the environment were of a uniform type. Differentiated physical features, a growing nucleus of population, and other factors combine to render theory impracticable.

Kant suggested that regions based on functional relationships more nearly represent reality than regions based on other factors and it is this attempt to achieve a study of reality that we must constantly bear in mind when considering spheres of influence. Most of the writers on the subject have tended to consider town-country relations in their literal context as, for example, in examining the relationship between a rural region and its county or market town. This, no doubt, represents a 'real' picture for many parts of England but for other large areas, indeed the parts covering the great majority of the population, it no longer bears much resemblance to the

actual conditions. Industry has migrated to the market towns; coal mining, ironstone mining, steel melting and other industrial occupations have spread to rural localities; new centres of population have been called into being by the needs of these industrial communities for service and entertainment; anciently established market towns have been overshadowed by the development of new centres initiated by the 19th century developments in communications. The effects of these factors, and many others, now represent the picture of reality for many parts of the country and it is these new relationships which must be examined if the task is not to be left but half completed.

The population of a village, whether the skyline be dominated by the headstock of a colliery or by agricultural land stretching away into the distance, will still need their weekly rations, they will still need their occasional trip into town in order to visit the cinema or the theatre, or to buy the new suite of furniture, or to consult the officials of the local employment exchange. And in the town, whether it be one which secured market rights near on a 1000 years ago, or one which has developed since 1850 to serve the expanding population at a railway junction, we shall find the shopkeeper ready to deliver goods to the surrounding area; we shall find that the bus service into the town is augmented on Saturdays in order to provide transport for shoppers and other visitors; and we shall find the local offices of the various government departments located in the bank chambers in the High Street,

ready to deal with enquiries both from the population of the town itself and that of the surrounding area.

The urban hierarchy may be more difficult to recognise and disentangle in an area dependent or semi-dependent on industry, and the spheres of influence may no longer be analysed as clear cut relationships between a market town and a rural neighbourhood, but nevertheless, these facts make no difference to the validity of the concept which attempts to determine those 'human space relationships' on which many aspects of modern government could more securely rest.

The writer, therefore, accepts the concept as it has been detailed, and at the same time he will endeavour to apply it not only to the rural areas of the county under consideration, but also to those parts where agriculture has become of but secondary importance. He considers that it has equal validity in either case though, of course, it will have different manifestations in the two areas.

A.W. Ashby spoke of the "inflow and outflow of goods, services, people, ideas, and knowledge,"⁽ⁱ⁾ as being concerned in the relations between a centre and its area of influence. Dickinson indicated that although the chief manifestations of the relationship will be economic yet they will also include social and cultural aspects.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ In accepting such embracing viewpoints of the concept, one is undertaking an investigation

(i) (Ashby A.W. op.cit. p.349)

(ii) (Dickinson R.E. City Region, and Regionalism. op.cit.p.11.)

impossible to complete, for it implies that the study can become virtually endless, for almost every aspect of community living can be reflected in community relationships. It will, therefore, be necessary to select those aspects of the subject which can give the most fruitful and the most typical results. The studies of the various specialists in this field have been carefully examined in order to ascertain the best method of approach. In some cases the methods which they have suggested have been applied to this study. In other cases the methods have needed modification before becoming at all useful. And in other cases old methods have been rejected as irrelevant, and new methods adopted, to meet new and unique circumstances.

Godlund determined spheres of influence in southern Sweden by an examination of transport facilities.⁽ⁱ⁾ In the United Kingdom much detailed work in this direction has been carried out by F.H.W. Green, formerly with the Ministry of Town and Country Planning. He has argued that as bus services developed in the 1920's and 1930's by process of trial and error, and unrestricted in their development until the appointment of traffic commissioners in 1935, that thereby the most economic routes have been discovered, the potential demand exploited, and the bus routes eventually stabilised to provide the majority of journeys in the directions that the majority of the population demand them.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ It is perhaps self evident, as

(i) (Godlund S. Trafik, Omland och Tatorter; Lund Studies in Geography. 1951)

(ii) (Green F.H.W. Urban Hinterlands in England and Wales. Geographical Journal 116. p.64)

many of the contacts between town and country are dependent on the means of transport being available, that the urban hinterlands as determined by a study of the transport facilities will be basic to other enquiries.

R.E. Park, an American Sociologist, was able to show from studies in the mid-west that:

"The circulation of the newspapers, when they are delimited on a map, serve to delimit, with almost exceptional accuracy the limits of the local trade area, and to measure at the same time the extent and the degree of dependence of the suburbs upon the metropolis.... Gradients of declining newspaper circulation measure the area of urban influence."⁽ⁱ⁾

Here, therefore, there would appear to be another line of approach giving valuable information about the relations between a centre and its environment. Smailes recognised the importance of the weekly newspaper which he found was usually found in association with schools, hospitals, cinemas, etc. He went on to say:

"A local weekly newspaper.... besides reflecting the existence of a district self-consciousness and of social associations within the area, can be a powerful agent for the promotion and focussing of a sense of common interest based on neighbourhood."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

In a detailed survey of Stamford and its relation to the surrounding area, the Ministry of Town and Country Planning

(i) Park R.E. Urbanisation as measured by Newspaper Circulation. American Journal of Sociology. 1929. Vol.35.p.60)
(ii) Smailes A.E. op. cit. p.43).

sought help and assistance from a wide variety of local institutions and establishments, including the weekly newspapers, the market, the post office, the cinemas, the public transport operators, the hospital, the shops, especially those with delivery rounds, the employment exchange, and the large employers of labour in the town. With this comprehensive information available the sphere of influence of Stamford could be gauged and the extent of the interchange between town and country, for this is as important as a survey of the area of interchange, could be ascertained with a reasonable degree of accuracy.⁽ⁱ⁾

The work of Dr. Bracey, especially in Wiltshire, provides further evidence of the scope of the investigations in determining the service areas of a relatively limited area, when an attempt is made to make the study a comprehensive one. Not only did Dr. Bracey investigate the means of transport and the method of local administration, and the relationships between town and country as far as marketing and shopping was concerned, but he also dealt with the organisation of the various voluntary and social groupings in the county, and from a study of all these items built up a picture of "median areas" which "correspond to the realities of today".⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Both Dickinson and Smailes recognised their urban centres by investigating the number of services which they possessed

(i) (Ministry of Town and County Planning. North Midland Region. Survey of Stamford. 1948)

(ii) (Bracey H.E. Social Provision in Rural Wiltshire. London. 1953.)

and measuring the situation in each settlement against a yardstick of certain key services, the absence of any of which in a particular settlement automatically implied its lower ranking in the urban hierarchy.

Dickinson, working on Bury St. Edmunds, found that the principal criteria in establishing its sphere of influence were firstly, the range of the market day bus services into the town, and secondly, the extent of the area within which goods were delivered by wholesale merchants.⁽ⁱ⁾

The methods so far described involve the commencement of the study in the towns and then around these, adding the areas with which they have functional contact. Other research workers, however, have made their studies in a different manner by treating the rural settlement as the unit for examination and then building up the spheres of influence of the towns on the basis of answers given to certain questions asked in each of these units. The North Midland Region of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning undertook such a survey but because of economy cuts in staff the results were never analysed (the survey was made available to the writer for study). At the present time a standing committee of the *Geographical Association* is undertaking a countrywide survey on these lines, in order to ascertain the spheres of influence of all urban centres. Theoretically, this would perhaps appear to be an

(i) (Dickinson R.E. The Markets and Market Areas of Bury St. Edmunds. *Sociological Review*. Vol. 22. 1929. p.292.)

ideal method, but owing to special local conditions it can only be of limited value unless a follow-up survey of the towns themselves is made and some attempt also made to obtain first hand knowledge of a locality, without which the relative strength of a formally recognised area with a community of interest cannot be gauged.

The variety of methods which have been studied have perhaps one feature in common. They are ultimately dependent for their success on the degree of detailed work which can be included in the survey. In some cases, methods will be used which will be relevant to a study of all the settlements, as, for example, in the analysis of transport services. In other cases, each settlement's relationship with its hinterland must be treated on an 'ad hoc' basis and the features of importance separated from those which carry less weight. In Leicestershire the importance of ascertaining accurately the sphere of influence of the cattle market at Melton Mowbray is self-evident for this is one of the major markets in the Midlands, in a town with a population of only 12,000 and whose other services and functions are not more important than those usually associated with a town of this size. In the west of the county, the development of the trading services offered by the Coalville Co-operative Society, to the inhabitants of an area perhaps twice the size of the town's ordinary shopping hinterland, is of first rate importance in dealing with the expansion of Coalville as a central settlement. It is points

such as these which cannot be recognised and given due consideration in any scheme dependent entirely on stereotyped and formal methods.

Two specific points remain to be clarified in connection with a study of the urban hierarchy and spheres of influence. The first of these is their relationship to aspects of local government or rather to local government areas. In 1834, the formation of the Poor Law Unions was based to a large extent on the service areas of the various marketing towns (we shall see in a later chapter just how far this was true of the Leicestershire unions). Lipman commented on the feature in the following terms:

"The formation of poor law unions.....shows... the combination of urban and rural components in a single unit; associated with it, however, was the phenomenon, virtually unique in the history of English local government, of the application of a scientifically deduced basic principle to the delimitation of areas, and their formation along the lines of uniformity and convenience." (i)

1834, however, marked both the first and the last date when units of local government were to bear resemblance to units of social, economic, and cultural ties and contacts. The division of town and country and the establishment of boundaries which bore no relation to the movements of

(i) (Lipman V.D. Local Government Area. 1834-1945. Oxford. 1949. p.36)

population ensured that the areas of local government were to be divorced from reality right down until the present day.

Lipman has commented thus on the contemporary situation:

"It seems significant to note the contrast between the structure of local government areas and that of analogous social and administrative areas, because both types of area are necessarily an attempt to solve the relationship between administrative and social life and geography.

There is a considerable body of material upon the social and geographical background to local government and the various items of evidence do point to broadly the same conclusions, which might well be taken into consideration in the event of a future recasting of local government areas"(i)

Furthermore the same author goes on to emphasize that 'no principle of political organisation is more firmly established than the maxim that the areas of public administration should approximate to the areas of diurnal movement of the population'. He suggests that with the apparent hierarchy of urban communities, together with the territories that they serve, that there should be further investigations into the geographical structure of the population, with particular reference to the varying radii of influence of the different centres and the services which they provide.(ii)

(i) { ibid. p.442 }
(ii) { ibid. p.443 }

Gilbert has also commented on the boundaries of local government areas. He has pointed out several geographical criticisms of the present situation. The divorce of town and country is something which must 'distress' the geographer 'who naturally regards them as complementary'. He considers that much of the apathy to local government is due to the fact that 'the boundaries do not recognise the daily tide of people journeying to and from work. Rigid administrative separation is completely out of touch with the facts of daily life and work'.⁽ⁱ⁾

W.A. Robson, another authority on local government, has criticised the present situation. He has quoted a statement made at the beginning of the century by S. and B. Webb to the effect that:

"So frequent and extensive have been the revolutions in industry and communications and so greatly has the population shifted, that it would be miraculous if any one of the thousands of separate local authorities now existing, found its historic order best suited to its modern functions."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

That, however, was written fifty years ago and Robson proceeded to detail deficiencies in the administrative system since then. He insists that the technique of efficient municipal administration needs more extensive units of local administration

(i) (Gilbert E.W. The boundaries of Local Government Areas. Geographical Journal. 1948. Vol.111.p.172)
(ii) (Webb, S.and B. A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain. 1902. p.208)

and suggests that this should have been a natural development resulting from the enlarging of the unit which we consider to be a locality. He concludes:

"The essential core of local government is the sense of community existing between a body of citizens and the association of that sense with a given territory in which they work and dwell"⁽ⁱ⁾

The same author also pointed out the fact that the daily tide of ebb and flow of population did not exist when the framework of local government was established. He has for example, some harsh comments on the incidence of the county boundaries which in many cases bear no relation to the position of the county town. The remedy for the present situation, he suggests;

"....lies in the re-integration of town and country through a series of wider areas, and not in an attempt to preserve a number of unreal and vexatious divisions"⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

These examples will suffice to indicate that, in the opinion of the experts, local government areas should ideally bear a close relationship to the areas of circulation - that is, to the hinterlands of the towns. At the moment, in its main essentials, this relationship does not exist and it will be part of the writer's task to bring out as clearly as possible the situation in Leicestershire, and having examined

(i) (Robson W.A. The Development of Local Government.
London. 1932. p.59)

(ii) (ibid. p.169)

the problems, to perhaps indicate along which lines solutions might be sought. The need for a fuller understanding of the problems has already been underlined:

"Most geographers will agree that many of the problems concerning areas for local government cannot be answered in the present state of our knowledge, and that what is needed is more research and more work on social geography....Whatever is, or is not done, it is vital that the administrative map of England and Wales should be redrawn so that it accords with the social geography of the country."⁽ⁱ⁾

The second point on which clarification is needed is the relationship between spheres of influence and local and regional planning. As previously pointed out, several planning documents of recent years, including the report of the Scott Commission ~~the~~ and the West Midland Group Survey of Herefordshire, made specific reference to the concept of urban hinterlands. This gives an indication as to the relationship under examination. Planning of the spatial organisation of society can make use of, and indeed it must make use of, the results of the investigations into the functional relations between urban settlement and its environment. A study of functional relationships, however, is not planning in itself. Dickinson was most explicit on this point for the opening paragraph of his book 'City, Region, and Regionalism' reads:

(i) (Gilbert. E.W. op.cit. p.178)

"This book is not about planning. It is concerned with certain aspects of the inherent spatial or geographical structure of society, upon which planning must be based, and it insists that knowledge of the anatomy of society must precede the treatment of its defects."⁽ⁱ⁾

Or again, S.W. Wooldridge, in the foreword which he wrote to Dr. Bracey's study of 'Social Provision in Rural Wiltshire', comments:

"'And what', I seem to hear, 'is such work designed to prove?' This question comes all too frequently.....when similar work is proposed by research workers in government service. One cannot too clearly or too strongly insist that, in so far as it is scientific work, it is not designed in advance to prove anything; it is an attempt to elucidate the facts, knowledge of which inform action. It is surely un-arguable that political and social surgery conducted upon a body of unknown anatomy and physiology must be condemned before it begins"⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Applying this argument to regional planning it is, of course, perfectly clear that the regions must be built up on a carefully worked out basis, and not established merely as arbitrary units. Professor E.G.R. Taylor, in leading a discussion concerned with the geographical aspects of planning, said that regions should possess an 'intrinsic wholeness'; that they should possess a

(i) (Dickinson R.E. City, Region and Regionalism.
op.cit. preface p.xiii)

(ii) (Wooldridge S.W. Foreword to 'Social Provision in Rural Wiltshire' by Dr. Bracey. p.vi)

social unity and that interest in a region 'is due to the fact that we know the region'; and our knowledge of it 'arises from the fact that we move about in it'.⁽ⁱ⁾ Bearing this in mind, the units of circulation must be delimited on factual and realistic lines so that the results might be utilised in planning the extent of the regions.

/ On a more local level, and quoting again from the same discussion, Lord Forester, the Chairman of the Association for Planning and Regional Construction, said:

"It is pointless to plan a town by itself in terms of trees and houses... and all other amenities... and to ignore the relationship between that town and the area functionally related to it. That relationship extends not only to questions of communications but also to the reasons for which those communications exist; accessibility to markets, to educational facilities, to work, to recreation, and so on".⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

And again, in planning at yet another level the following comments on rural neighbourhoods were made for the Ministry of Town and Country Planning:

"In the hierarchy of social units, the most significant one from the point of view of rural planning is the small country town and the complement of villages which fall within its sphere of influence....This may be termed a rural

(i) (Discussion following Paper on the Boundaries of Local Government Areas by E.W. Gilbert. op.cit.)
(ii) (ibid)

"neighbourhood....It should have the same community of interest and a certain minimum of social and economic service."(i)

Such information can, of course, only be obtained by research and investigation. In the considered opinions of the experts, planning at its various spatial levels, should be preceded by an investigation into the structure of society. The overall need for, and the usefulness of these studies, has been emphasised by Dickinson.

"It would then appear that the analysis of the geographical structure of society, in town and country, with respect to the character and extent of the existing service and community areas, and to the minimum needs of the different types of service, be they social, commercial, cultural, or administrative, affords a sound and essential basis for the planning of communities in the city, the town, and the countryside. This, however, is not a problem for the geographer alone, nor for the economist, nor for the sociologist. It is a problem to which all can make their contribution, and is likely to be one of the most fruitful fields of future research in the social sciences"(ii)

The comments on planning and on local government have both been concluded by emphasising the need for research into the

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- (i) (Waite W.L. and Hutchings G.E. The Study of Rural Neighbourhoods. A Ministry of Town and Country Planning Discussion Paper. (unpublished).)
- (ii) (Dickinson R.E. 'Ecology' in 'Physical Planning' op.cit. p.128)

social structure of society as a pre-requisite for the more effective design of the administration of society. It is hoped that this work may have the same relationship to the problems of local government and planning in the limited area which is to be placed under the microscope of social geographical analysis.

So far, throughout the discussions on the various manifestations of the concept of the urban hierarchy and spheres of influence, the assumption has been made that agreement on this type of study forming an integral part of geography, is readily acceptable. The writings of some geographers, however, lead one to suppose that perhaps this assumption is not wholly valid. Some geographers would maintain that human society might only be legitimately studied as a part of geography when it is immediately related to some facet of the physical background. If this is the case then many aspects of spheres of influence would appear to be automatically excluded from geographical work.

Or again, the definition of Geography, as agreed by the Geographical Glossary Committee set up by Section E of the British Association, states that it is "the science that describes the earth's surface with particular reference to the differentiation and relationship of areas". Some aspects of a study of urban spheres of influence most certainly do not involve a study and a description of the earth's surface, if this is taken in its literal sense.

Do these points of view as to the nature of geographical studies invalidate the assumption which has been made ? If one were to accept them as defining the study of geography then the answer must be 'yes'. However, the writer regards geographical studies in rather a different light, influenced by the work of Hartshorn as seen in his study of "The Nature of Geography"⁽ⁱ⁾ and by the guidance of Professor R.H. Kinvig, whose concept of geography has been most recently expressed in the Presidential Address which he gave to the meeting of Section E of the British Association in Liverpool in September 1953.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Dickinson, on several occasions, referred to the fact that the work of geographers, sociologists, and economists overlapped when urban-rural relationships were under discussion. This is perhaps best illustrated by observing that research workers from all these disciplines have at one time or another pursued investigations into very similar topics. Their works have been referred to earlier in the chapter. To critics from the ranks of geographers this would appear to be sufficient justification for denying the validity of the topic as a legitimate field for geographical research. The criticism, however, would appear to be totally unjustified.

It has for a very long time been universally accepted amongst geographers that both ~~the~~ the geologist and the geographer

(i) (Hartshorn R. The Nature of Geography. New York, 1939)
 (ii) (Kinvig, R.H. The Geographer as Humanist. The
 Advancement of Science. No. 38. Sept. 1953)

should study the distribution and structure of rock formations and that, in similar vein, both the metereologist and the geographer are at liberty to study the same phenomena. The essential difference between the systematic scientist and the geographer in both these instances, lies in the use to which they put their respective studies. The geologist will study the rocks because of his interest in the phenomena themselves, while the physical geographer will study them in order to establish the existence and boundaries of physiographic regions or provinces. The metereologist is interested in the facts and figures of temperature and precipitation for their intrinsic worth while the geographer's interest in them is that they may assist in the delimitation of climatic regions. With a geographer working in these fields no disagreement is expressed and it is not suggested that his work cannot be classified as geographical studies.

Surely, with equal justification, this point of view may be applied to the field of human sciences and human activities. The social framework of society may be studied by the sociologist because of his concern for the systematisation of the facts themselves. The social framework of society may be studied by the geographer because as a result of his work, he is able to attempt a regional division of society based on the attraction of the various urban centres. In establishing such urban regions in which there is a regular pattern of movement and within which homogeneity is brought about by the "welding force of the centre" (Dickinson), one would seem to be doing

exactly the same kind of geographical exercise as a geographer establishing regions based on physiographical or meteorological considerations. Indeed the latter regions, in omitting entirely the work of man, are considerably less 'real' than those ascertained from the former studies. In the words of Hartshorn, so succinctly expressed:

"The existence of concrete areal wholes (regions) is dependent on one factor in the real world that is capable, within limits, of producing distinct areal units, and of organising them in terms of structure and function into wholes - namely MAN."(i)

Such then would^{be} the theoretical justification, if, indeed, such justification is necessary, of a geographer involving himself in studies of the social framework of the society in which we exist.

"Ideally," Hartshorn records, "Geography receives from other sciences, or from general statistical sources, the necessary data concerning the distribution of any phenomenon; it classifies the various forms of that phenomenon in a way that is suitable for geographical purpose, that is, in terms of characteristics significant to regional character, whether or not such classification is available from other sciences....Geography starts with these facts and principles, assuming that the systematic science concerned have provided them, as frankly borrowed material."(ii)

(i) (Hartshorn R. op.cit. p.278)
(ii) (ibid. p.424)

Ideally, therefore, in a study of urban spheres of influence and the urban hierarchy, the systematic science of sociology should provide the geographer with the facts of distribution which are required for an analysis of town-country relations. Sociology, however, as a systematic science is less developed than a physical systematic science such as geology, which provides the facts of distribution to the physical geographer, and thus, in many instances, it is necessary for the geographer to do his own investigations into the distribution of the social phenomena concerned and, in doing so, as Dickinson has pointed out, he will "often be dealing with material which is marginal to geography."⁽ⁱ⁾ It is surely in this facet of the problem that the only misconceptions might arise concerning the validity of associating geographical research with studies of urban spheres of influence.

To turn, however, from the theory, the discussion of method of approach, and the considerations of what is, or what is not geography, to an examination of the scope of the study being undertaken in this thesis. First of all the question might be asked, "Well, and what is the reason for the choice of a county as the unit of study, and why, in particular, should it be Leicestershire?"

For an individual investigator it is essential that some satisfactory areal limits be given to the study. Unlike the study of an aspect of economic geography, say, for example, the

(i) (Dickinson R.E. City, Region, and Regionalism.
op.cit. Preface p.xiii)

distribution of the fireclay industry, which has its extent delimited by the fact that a particular industry only occurs in certain areas, the study of urban spheres of influence can be a universal one. If arbitrary limits must be sought, as perforce they must, except in the case of a comprehensive investigation such as that being undertaken by the Geographical Association's Standing Committee on urban spheres of influence, then a choice must be made to ensure that the study is both practical and worth-while. A research worker might choose to examine the relationships between a group of towns, but in doing so, may run up against difficulties when collecting evidence owing to the varying amount and reliability of the information available for the several places. And again, the choice of a group of towns may bear no relationship to many of the factors involved in the contemporary social division of society, and it would then appear that the study is automatically limited in its scope and application.

To study town-country relations within a county, on the other hand, would appear to offer certain overwhelming advantages. Firstly, it is on a county basis that we find many of the sources of information available. One needs to mention but a selection of these; viz. census returns, directories, official reports, agricultural reports, aspects of social organisation, and maps of various types etc. This is of immense importance when time is of any significance. The truth of this has been brought home to the writer in the course of his investigations for, although all the above-mentioned documents

are available on the county basis, yet, in so far as it has been necessary to consult maps and statistics, etc. referring to the adjoining counties of Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Rutland (See Fig. 1.), the often extremely limited amount of information required from these various areas has often taken as much time and energy to collate, as that for the whole area of Leicestershire.

Secondly, apart from the practical advantages, there are other factors in the situation which point out the county as a well defined unit for study on a logical basis. Counties have developed since 1888, and more especially since 1945, as the most important units in the structure of local government. And as, as has already been pointed out, there is a relationship between local government and the concept of urban spheres of influence some attempt should be made to investigate the relationships in the local studies.

Furthermore, counties are something more than mere administrative areas. They are, albeit to greatly varying extents, 'units of common living' developed with the passage of many hundreds of years as areas with more or less stable boundaries. They may not always represent areas of common living based on the concept of areas of circulation, as, for example, in the case of Warwickshire, but the avidity with which such county institutions as the cricket team or the soccer team of the county town are followed by the whole mass of the population, does reveal that county feeling is not entirely lost.

And this is particularly true in the case of Leicestershire. In addition to the appeal of the Leicestershire cricket club and the close attention paid to the fortunes of the 'City' (Leicester City Football Club) the county does still represent fairly accurately an area of 'common living' based on the unification brought about by the attractions of, and the services rendered by, the county town. It is over a 1000 years since the shire of Leicester was formed. According to Peake the date was between 901 and 925 A.D. and the extent of the shire was determined according to the area which at that time could be successfully defended by an army stationed in the leading town.⁽ⁱ⁾ Green even goes so far as to make the following statement:

"When many English counties were first constituted they were in fact spheres of influence of certain major centres after which they were named. Thus one shire was constituted as the hinterland of Leicester."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Since this time, the boundaries of the ancient county have scarcely changed, and thus the choice of Leicestershire as the unit of study immediately suggests that the position of Leicester through the centuries, as the central settlement for the area placed under its control in the remote past, must form one aspect of the study. Furthermore, related to the position

(i) (Peake H. Geographical Aspects of Administrative Areas. Geography. 15. p.531)

(ii) (Green F.H.W. The Value of Transport Services in the delimitation of town and country. Paper read to the Royal Geographical Society. 1949)

of Leicester, the fortunes of the smaller settlements in the county, which have never succeeded in wresting from the county town the pre-eminence with which it was endowed, must also be traced through and examined.

Here, therefore, is a clearly defined area for investigation; an area whose extent has been based on a geographical fact of 1000 years standing; a fact which in itself justifies some investigation.

One point, however, should be borne in mind; the boundaries of the county have not been treated as rigidly as they have often been treated by legislators in the past. The position of Leicester in the centre of the county implies that the service centres of a lower order are found at points towards the periphery of the county, and, therefore, their spheres of influence extend into other counties. In these cases, the basic unit of study has been the determined sphere of influence of the smaller centre, rather than merely that part of it which falls in Leicestershire. And, on the other hand, some towns peripheral to the county, have extended their hinterlands into Leicestershire and hence their services must be borne in mind when the situation is examined. Finally, the place of Leicester and Leicestershire in the regional framework of the country (see Fig.1.) are also borne in mind, although this may involve factors outside the immediate area of the county.

Having looked at the choice of Leicestershire as the unit of study, perhaps some indication ought to be given of the

LEICESTERSHIRE IN ITS REGIONAL SETTING

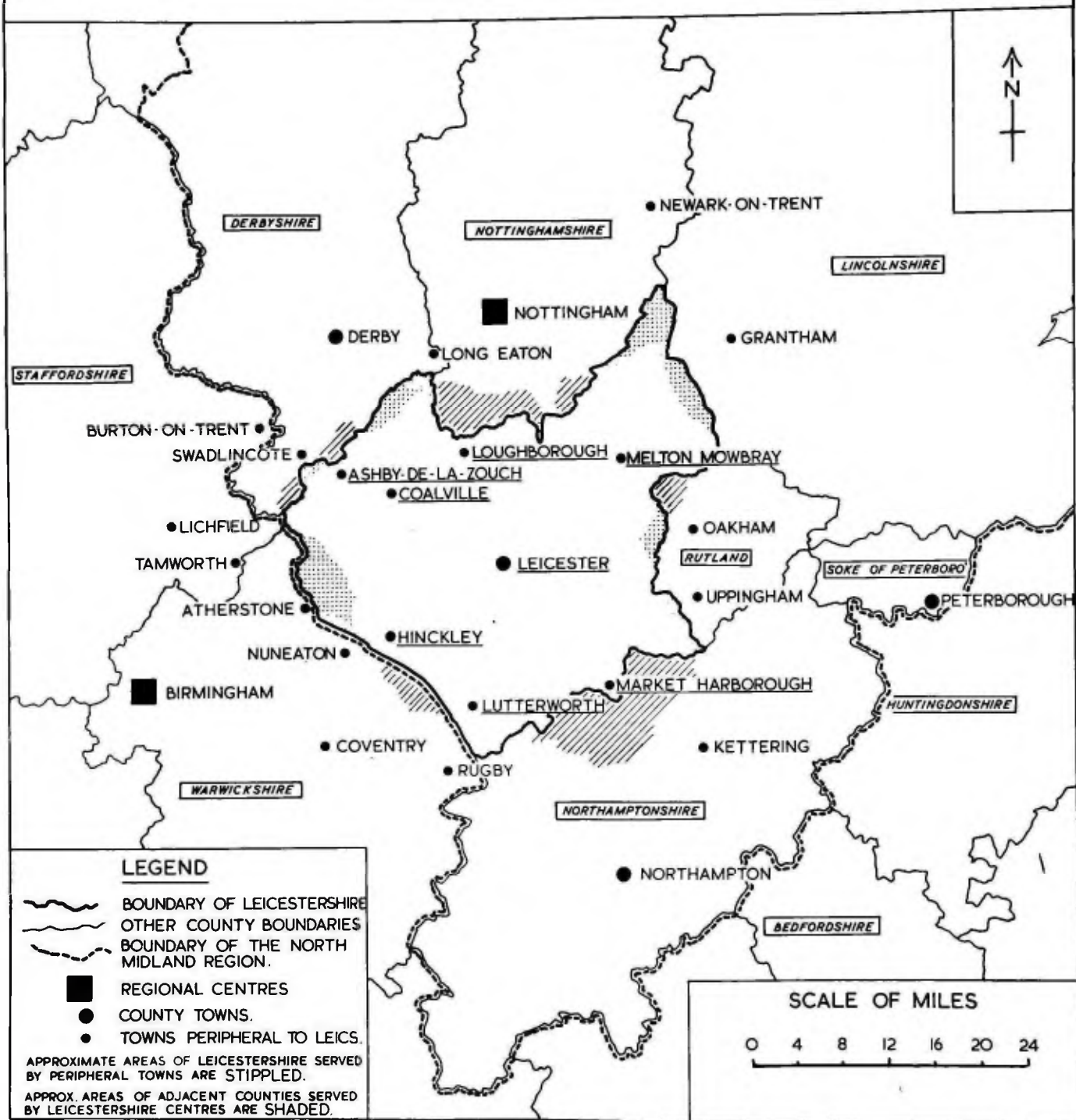


FIG. 1.

reasons lying behind the decision to investigate the 'development' of urban spheres of influence. Firstly, the maxim that 'the past is the key to the present' is as true in a study of this nature as in any other historical or geographical work. Indeed, one would go further, and state that the present situation in town-country relations can only be fully analysed and comprehended when past conditions are taken into consideration. The position of the small town of Lutterworth, with a population of under 3,000, but serving as a centre, for south-west Leicestershire, for a wide variety of services and containing two fine coaching inns, can only be understood when the position in the 19th century, when the town was one of the leading market towns of the county, is fully investigated. And in the north-west of the county the juxtaposition of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, both service centres of some considerable importance, can only be fully explained when the development of the two settlements and their neighbourhoods in the 19th and early 20th centuries is fully analysed.

The main features of the settlement pattern may have been established in Leicestershire by the end of the Danish era, in about the middle of the 10th century,⁽ⁱ⁾ but so many changes have occurred in the relative rates of expansion of different settlements and, furthermore, one or two new settlements have

(i) (Hoskins W.G. The Anglian and Scandinavian Settlement of Leicestershire, Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological Society. Vol.18. 1934. p.110)

been founded, as, for example, Market Harborough in the late 12th century, and Coalville in the late 19th century, that town-country relationships have undergone important modifications. And, of course, developments in the way of life since the industrial revolution have caused a revolution in the nature of the relationships between town and country.

Nevertheless, the changes which have occurred have not been of a 'catastrophic' nature. Rather have they been grafted on to pre-existing conditions so that no picture of the present which does not take cognizance of the past can hope to be a truly realistic one. As Hartshorn commented:

"The geography of certain areas¹⁶² is different from what one would expect from present conditions, and has perhaps been conditioned very largely by the geography of some particular period of the past....so that the present can most readily be understood if the history of that particular period is first portrayed." (i)

The study of the 'development' of urban spheres of influence implies three main lines of approach. Firstly, an attempt will be made to trace the expansion of one town's sphere of influence at the expense of another's as, for example, in the extension of the shopping hinterland of Leicester to the south-west, at the expense of the hinterland formerly enjoyed by Lutterworth.

Secondly, the intensification of the relationships between urban centres and their hinterlands, especially in the last 30

(i) (Hartshorn R. op.cit. p.187)

years, will be closely studied. Thus, from providing only marketing and embryonic administrative services in the middle of the 19th century, the towns have so developed as central settlements that they currently provide a whole range of services to meet the increasing needs of the population.

Thirdly, the changing conditions of the urban hierarchy will be examined. In 1850 there were but minor differences, at least as far as the great majority of the population was concerned, between the facilities offered by the local market town, such as Melton Mowbray or Lutterworth, and those offered by the county centre. Today, however, there is a wide gap between the service facilities offered by Leicester and those offered by the smaller market towns. Leicester provides all those facilities offered by a town such as Melton, but it also supplies a whole range of specialised services such as huge department stores, specialist hospital facilities, special entertainment facilities, and so on.

At the other end of the urban hierarchy the growth of population resulting from the industrialisation of former rural communities has led to the more widespread distribution of service facilities supplying weekly needs (shopping and professional facilities) and far from these needs now being supplied only by the market towns they can also be met, to a certain extent at least, in a score of other settlements in the county. The effect of this development on the status of the market towns will be closely examined.

The scope of the study from the chronological viewpoint

demands closer attention. Three main periods may be recognised. The first period ends about the middle of the 18th century, when the traditional relationships between market town and rural neighbourhood begin to change as a result of the development of turnpikes, this leading to the decline of some old established market centres and the centralisation of additional traffic on those which remained, and the beginnings of the industrial revolution with its immediate effect on the size and functions of settlements such as Leicester.

The second period covers the end of the 18th century, the whole of the 19th century and the first decade or so of the 20th century. Traditional relationships between town and country were breaking down; the process of industrialisation affected not only the towns, but also many of the formerly agricultural villages in large areas of Leicestershire. The towns developed other functions apart from their functions as service centres, and indeed, the service factor became of only secondary importance in the economies of several of the Leicestershire towns, especially the county town, Loughborough, and Hinckley. Moreover, the services which had to be provided to the inhabitants of a hinterland became of less importance than those demanded and supplied to the locally resident industrial and commercial population. The divorce between town and country from the economic standpoint was reflected in the physical separation which continued by virtue of the lack of effective communications. After the middle of the 19th century the railways brought town

resident. In this particular instance an example drawn from a Leicestershire village indicates the extent of the change which has taken place. Nailstone is a mining-cum-agricultural community located some 15 miles away from the city of Leicester. Before the 1914-18 war communication between village and city was almost non-existent, and a resident of the village who had to find work in Leicester could only visit her home perhaps once in twelve months. Today Nailstone has a daily bus service to Leicester which is used as the centre for shopping and entertainment requirements. Villagers working in the city today travel home every evening.

Country and town are now more than ever essentially interdependent; an improvement in the facilities offered by the city or town are now equally important to the person living up to 20 miles away, as to those actually resident in the city itself. Urban facilities are increasingly being brought into the 'modus vivendi' of the rural inhabitants, both by the provision of services such as electricity, gas, and piped water supplies to village and farmstead, and by bringing the country within reach of the town by means of improved communication. This third period is one in which there has been a great intensification in the relationships between town and country, and it is no simple task to sort out the different strands making up the fabric of these relationships.

Bearing in mind these three recognisable periods, and also bearing in mind the fact that geography does not involve a chronological study but rather demands an investigation into the

and country together in some instances, but, for the majority of the rural population, a visit to town still meant either an extended walk or, alternatively, an uncomfortable and slow journey by the market day carriers' cart in company with the various items of equipment and supplies moved from town to village by this means of transport. As previously pointed out, after the Poor Law Amendment Act which endeavoured to maintain administrative contacts between town and country, successive Acts of Parliament, culminating in the Districts Councils Act of 1894, succeeded in dividing town from country in the sphere of government.

This second period is one in which much more material is available for investigation. Directories, the census returns, local newspapers, evidence given before local enquiries, official documents, and so on all offer sources from which information about spheres of influence can be gleaned and thereafter analysed.

The third period, which began with the Great War, is still not concluded. It is a period in which town-country relationships have been revolutionised by modern inventions, and most particularly, by the development of the internal combustion engine. The towns no longer merely provide marketing facilities for the inhabitants of the rural area. They are also centres of employment, of entertainment, of social and educational activities, and of effective administration, both official and voluntary. A visit to town has become an essential part of the way of life of the country

factors contributing to areal differentiation at a certain period of time (or as Hettner put it, 'Geography does not follow the course of time as such but lays a cross section through a particular point in time and draws on temporal development only to explain the situation in that time chosen'),⁽ⁱ⁾ the study of the 'development' of urban spheres of influence has been achieved by detailed analyses of the situation in the county at certain key dates.

Following introductory chapters on the development of service centres from medieval times, the first cross-section through the temporal development of urban spheres of influence is drawn in 1800. This gives a picture of the situation as near to the end of the period of traditional relationships between town and country as is possible, for although it has been suggested that these relationships were breaking down by the middle of the 18th century yet at that time there is no evidence available on which details of urban hinterlands etc. can be based.

In the following section a detailed analysis of the situation is made for 1850, a convenient date in the second period when important items of evidence are available, and before the situation was unduly complicated by the development of railways.

In the third section, a cross-section is drawn for 1900,

(i) (Hettner, A. Das Wesen und die Methoden der Geographie. 1905. Quoted by Hartshorn R. op.cit. p.184.)

again a convenient date in the second period, and moreover a date marking the end of the era of railway building in the county.

And finally, a study of contemporary conditions is made to illustrate relationships in the third period.

At each cross-section through the various points in time, the following method of approach has been utilised. Firstly, an attempt has been made, by means depending on the evidence available, to establish the hierarchy of service centres. For the main centres thus established - viz. the market towns of 1851; the 'bus centres in the contemporary situation - evidence has been analysed to determine their spheres of influence. Further analyses proceed to determine the relation of each centre to its hinterland; to examine the transport facilities available between town and country; to assess the distribution and importance of subsidiary centres within the hinterlands; to compare the population of a town with that of its hinterland area; to determine how important the centralised servicing facilities are to the life of a town when compared to the importance of its other activities; and to examine the facilities which a town offers both to its own inhabitants and to those of the hinterland area.

For each of the studies cartographical analysis has been used to the maximum possible extent. Maps and diagrams have been constructed to illustrate the distribution and relationships of various phenomena and from these, deductions can be made as to the nature of town-country relations. In addition other maps

have been constructed to demonstrate deductions made from other items of evidence.

Finally, the comparisons and the contrasts between the pictures drawn at the several dates are examined. As Hartshorn comments:

"If a geographer studies the historical geography of a single region at two or more different times, he will, of course, be concerned with the differences among the several pictures. This type of study.....would appear to have its place as a form of comparative historical geography." (i)

Such is the scope and nature of the work undertaken in the study of the development of urban spheres of influence in Leicestershire. One matter remains to be dealt with; the question of terminology. The term 'spheres of influence', in spite of its more or less general acceptance and usage, appears to the writer to be an awkward and, in some ways, an unfortunate term. It suggests, first of all, too great a regularity in the shape of an area dependent upon a town or city; whereas, under ideal conditions, spheres of influence might be spherical, or hexagonal, in shape; in practice, they are so affected by factors such as relief, the distribution of population, and relationships with competing centres and so on, that a regularly shaped area is the exception rather than the rule.

In addition, the term 'spheres of influence' suggests mutually exclusive zones, especially when we draw the obvious

(i) (Hartshorn R. op.cit. p.187)

comparison with the use of the term in its political connotation. In connection with the spheres of influence of urban centres, however, only in^a few cases can the boundary between the influence of one centre and another be drawn on a clearly defined basis. At the present time especially, the great improvement in communications has led to an intensification of competition between centres for the servicing of very extensive areas.

In view of these two disadvantages of the term 'spheres of influence', the term 'urban hinterlands' would appear to be equally appropriate, in spite of the more usual connection of 'hinterlands' with the area dependent upon a port. The prefix 'urban' should, however, clearly distinguish the one usage from the other. Indeed, it would perhaps be advantageous to use the same basic terminology in these two cases, for the relationship between a port and its tributary area, involving the flow of men and materials in both directions, is very similar to the relationship which exists between a town and its sphere of influence. Both, indeed, are 'areas of circulation'.

The term 'urban hinterlands' has also the additional advantage of being both explicit and short, and in this work, both in the text and on the maps and diagrams, it will be used as an alternative to the term 'spheres of influence'.

SECTION ONE.

THE MARKET TOWNS AND THEIR HINTERLANDS

UP TO 1800.

CHAPTER ONE.URBAN-RURAL RELATIONSHIPS IN MEDIEVAL LEICESTERSHIRE.

'Before the Industrial Revolution, when the towns were chiefly marketing centres for the handicrafts and farm produce of the surrounding countryside, the centralised services were especially important in determining both the size and the spacing of the towns. Then the market town was the seat of services for an area within about one hour's journey by road.'⁽ⁱ⁾

Thus Professor Dickinson indicated the relationship between town and country in the days prior to the Industrial Revolution. Towns are an essential feature of the life of an agricultural community and they owed their origin 'to the necessary concentration of specialised non-agricultural services in relatively few settlements'.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Apart from skilled craftsmen, the facilities for the disposal of surplus products from the farm and the opportunity to 'purchase such conveniences as were needed, or such luxuries as the general simplicity of the age allowed',⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ were those which the town was called upon to provide. The functions and the importance of these early markets have been described in the following words:

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- (i) (Dickinson R.E. City, Region and Regionalism. London. 1947. p.29)
(ii) (Dickinson R.E. The Distribution and Functions of the smaller urban settlements of East Anglia. Geog. 17. 1932. p.19)
(iii) (Rogers J.E. A History of Agriculture and Prices in England. London 1866. p.650)

'There were, notwithstanding the general completeness of the parish or manorial system and its practical independence, great reasons for free communication between the parishes by means of markets and fairs.... The regular process of distribution by means of retail shops had in those days no existence, except perhaps in the larger towns.... and it was only at fairs or markets that any wants could be supplied. It was only by these means that any surplus products could be disposed of.... In the village everyone was engaged in the same or nearly the same occupation. The exchange of commodities could only be effected in some common market, in which the agent for the townsfolk purchased country products, and supplied the conveniences which the small farmer required. Both parties brought their wares to market.' (i)

By the 11th century Market Rights were strictly controlled and before examining in detail the situation as it developed in Leicestershire it is necessary to survey the process by which a settlement achieved these trading rights. The report of the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls comments:

'In the 11th. century the principle had been adopted..... that markets and fairs should be confined to those places which were appropriated to such uses by charter



'or custom, or which thereafter should be so appropriated by the king or a mesne lord acting under authority delegated by the crown' (i)

Thus the king or his nominee had absolute power to say 'yes' or 'no' to a plea for the grant of market rights in any settlement. However, the applicants had to make out a case for their plea because:

'In granting a charter, regard was had to those factors which would contribute to the success of the market from a revenue standpoint, especially to the existence of a likely site which had already been used as a buying and selling centre within easy access of ports, roads, bridgeheads, and other points where traders congregate.' (ii)

A tradition of trading and good communications were, therefore, of influence with the Crown when the question was to be decided.

These factors are seen most clearly operating in Leicestershire in the case of Market Harborough. This settlement came into existence in the 12th century on a route-way between Leicester and Northampton at the place where the road crossed the River Welland. Around the initial hostelry a settlement developed and by virtue of its favourable position it developed a local trade as the centre supplying the needs of the surrounding countryside. Its position as a trading centre was later regularised when market rights were officially

(i) (1st Report of the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls. 1888. p.16)
(ii) (M. of Agriculture and Fisheries. Report on Markets and Fairs 1927. Part 1. p.6)

granted to the town.

However, political factors must also be taken into account when viewing the grants of rights to market status. Often the lord of a manor was rewarded by the privilege of a market to be held in his domains. For example, in Leicestershire Sir Hugh la Zouch was given market rights in his manor at Ashby in 1373 'for services rendered'.

In theory 'the charters of grant were framed with a saving clause to protect the interests of the owners of neighbouring markets',⁽ⁱ⁾ but this does not always appear to have been strictly observed as many of the settlements granted market rights in Leicestershire were too close together so as not to be a 'nuisance' to each other. For example, market rights were granted to the settlement of Lubenham in 1327 notwithstanding the fact that in the previous century Market Harborough, less than two miles away, had also been granted such rights. Perhaps in this case we see another example of Royal patronage or of a lord willing to pay heavily for the privilege.

Thus, while in one respect the granting of market status was recognition of an advantageous position for trade and service, yet this must of necessity be qualified by taking into consideration the fact that the king may have been influenced by factors more profitable to himself. Locational advantages

(i) (Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls.
op. cit. p.21.)

would, however, ensure the profitability of a market once it had been officially established and these will later be examined in the cases of the Leicestershire market towns which survived as important trading centres.

Markets, then, were an essential feature of the medieval landscape. As the trade of the country was mainly carried on in these markets and fairs then the possession of market rights by a settlement would have an important effect on its prosperity.

'The grant of market privileges....made a place the buying and selling centre for the whole district, while the right of holding a fair would attract buyers and sellers from a much wider area. '(i)

Thus the importance of the place would be greatly enhanced, all sections of the community sharing in the benefits.

'The right to hold a market and fair was a valuable privilege and one much sought after by manorial lords who derived profit from letting the ground to traders who came to sell their wares, and by tolls on all goods and cattle sold there. The lords, their tenants, and others also benefitted indirectly by the convenience of a market close at hand for the produce the neighbourhood had for sale, including the things made by the local craftsmen, and for the things it wished to buy. '(ii)

(i) (M. of Agriculture & Fisheries. Report on markets and fairs. op. cit. p.6)
 (ii) (Cooper W: Henley-in-Arden; an ancient market town. Birmingham 1946. p.2.)

A successful market, however, would bring other advantages and functions to the town in which it was being held. This process has been described in the following words:

'As the market developed all the ancillary trades and activities dependent upon it sprang up in and around the centre. Moreover as the rural communities ceased to be content with what they grew or made themselves they needed to buy from the outside world. In this way the market town became the centre not only for the country man to dispose of his products, but also for him to buy his requirements. It became the clearing house of the countryside.'⁽ⁱ⁾

Thus in a cumulative process the town's activities would show a steady expansion and an increase in the population would occur as people moved into the town in order to find work in the rural industries of tanning, milling, brewing, spinning, weaving and the like which would automatically develop to some extent around the place where the raw materials were being sold, bought, and exchanged. Until the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution the market towns were the only centres of considerable non-agricultural wealth and it was to these towns that the rural population looked for the satisfaction of its needs. Herein lies the key to urban-rural relationships in the medieval period.

(i) (Report of the Royal Commission on Land Use in Rural Areas. 1941. Cmd. 6378. Paragraph 40)

It has been possible to draw up a list of settlements in Leicestershire which were granted market rights by referring to several sources of information.⁽ⁱ⁾ A market was held in Melton Mowbray at the time of the Domesday Survey for in that document it is recorded that 'The market yields 20/-'.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ It may also be assumed that at this time markets were being held in Leicester which was a town of some 2000 inhabitants and which had in the previous century been made the head town of one of the Midland shires. A Fair of unknown origin was recorded as being held in Leicester as early as 1228 and both the Wednesday and the Saturday markets were of ancient origin.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ At Hinckley the earliest reference to the market is not until 1311, by which date it had been in existence for an unknown length of time. It is considered by some historians that the absence of a charter points to its being held before the Norman conquest in 1066.^(iv)

For the remainder of the markets in the county the dates of their charters are known. In the 12th century a market and fair was granted to the town of Lutterworth and in the first few years of the following century there was a spate of charters granted. The market at Harborough was recognised in 1208; in

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- (i) (Nichols. J. History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester. London. 1795-1811. 4 vols. Farnham. Leicestershire Village Notes. Leicester. 1929. Harlein Manuscript. Markets and Fairs in Leicestershire. 6700. p.118. B.M. Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls. 1888)
- (ii) (Quoted in Nichols. J. op.cit. Vol.1. Part 1. p.xxiii)
- (iii) (Billson C.J. Medieval Leicester. Leicester 1920.p.112ff)
- (iv) (Francis H.J. History of Hinckley. Hinckley 1930.p.36)

1219 Roger la Zouch agreed to pay the king a fine of 'one palfrey' for a market and fair to be held in his manor at Ashby; Narborough was similarly favoured in the same year; Waltham in the following year; and in 1222 the town of Loughborough received its first charter. Thence throughout the remainder of the 13th century and the first half of the 14th many towns and villages in the county were favoured by market privileges. By 1348 a total of 36 settlements had the right to a weekly market and an annual fair. Their distribution is shown in the first diagram on Fig. 2 and in table 1 are detailed the dates of the charters.

Dr Bracey has suggested that in the medieval period in lowland England the pattern of distribution of market settlements showed a spacing of three to four miles.⁽ⁱ⁾ This, however, was not the case in Leicestershire, as is indicated in Fig. 2, even assuming that all the markets were active simultaneously. It is only in north-east Leicestershire that the markets are found so closely spaced. Here, Scalford, Wymondham, Stapleford and Gaddesby were granted market rights within a few years of each other and one wonders if there were any political motives behind the liberality of Edward I in granting so many charters, especially as the settlements were so close to the then existing markets at Melton and Waltham. Elsewhere in the county it is only in isolated instances that two markets are found

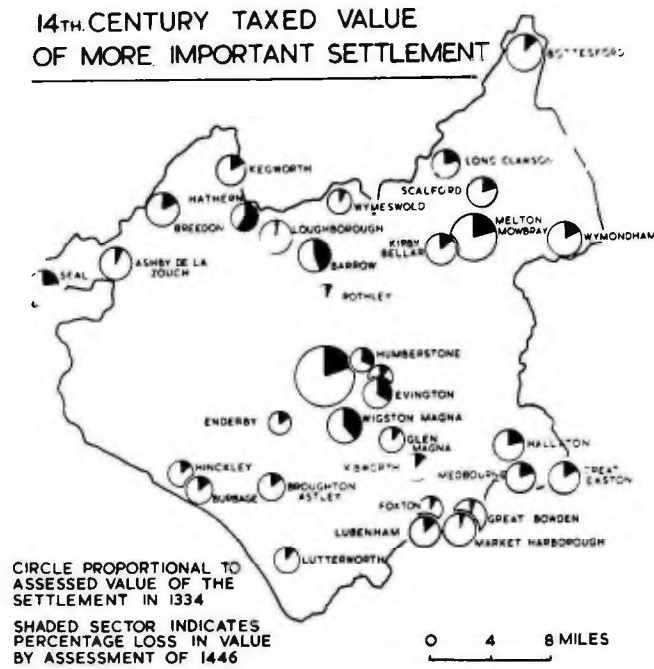
(i) (Bracey H.E. Some Rural Social Trends. A Paper read to the Summer School of the Town Planning Institute. 1952.)

LEICESTERSHIRE: SOME INDICATIONS OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF SETTLEMENTS BEFORE 1800

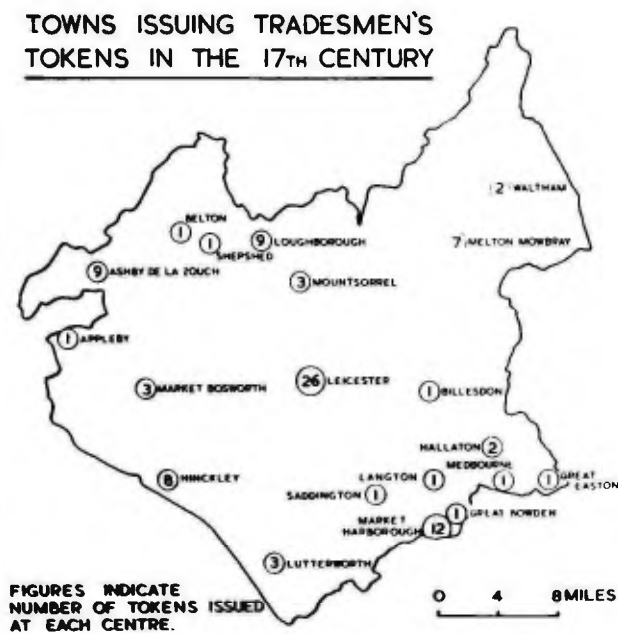
TOWNS WITH MEDIEVAL MARKET RIGHTS



14TH-CENTURY TAXED VALUE OF MORE IMPORTANT SETTLEMENT



TOWNS ISSUING TRADESMEN'S TOKENS IN THE 17TH CENTURY



LATE 18TH-CENTURY POST TOWNS

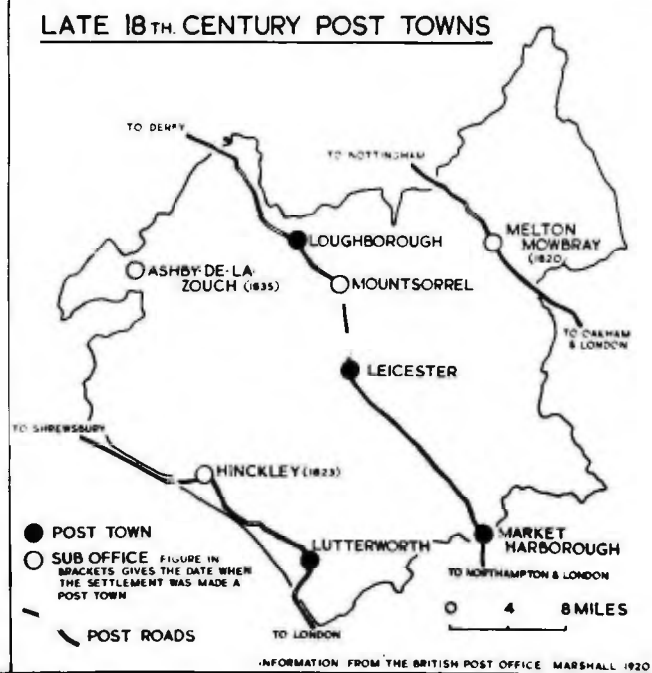


FIG. 2.

within four miles of each other. Otherwise the distances are greater, in some cases ranging up to ten or twelve miles as between the towns of Hinckley and Lutterworth in the south-west of the county or between Wymeswold and Melton in the north-east.

It has been suggested in the introduction to this chapter^t that the possession of market rights would lead to an increase in the wealth of the settlement. A 14th century tax return makes a correlation along these lines possible. In 1334, that is, at a date when all the market charters with but three exceptions had been granted in Leicestershire, a nation wide levy was made on the wealth of individual settlements. This assessment 'reflected fairly accurately the relative importance of the various places in England.'⁽ⁱ⁾ Hence one would expect that those settlements possessing the advantages of market status to be numbered amongst the more valuable settlements. Where the market rights had not been utilised the settlements would be of less value.

Out of a total of more than three hundred settlements in the county of Leicester only 31 were worth sufficient to be taxed an amount exceeding £4. These are listed in table 1. Sixteen places with market status were numbered amongst these. Moreover of the nine settlements worth more than a taxable value of £7 only two did not have market rights. Five of the non-market settlements included amongst these 31 places were within a mile or two of the city of Leicester and their greater

(i) (Hoskins, W.G. The Origin and Rise of Market Harborough. Trans. Leics. Arch. Soc. Vol.25. 1949. p.65)

Table showing settlements in Leicestershire Taxed more than £4 in 1334: and other settlements which were granted market rights

Towns granted market rights	Date of Charter	Tax 1334 £s	Tax 1446 £s	Settlements not granted market rights
Leicester	1086	26.7	21.0	Wigston Magna
Melton Mowbray	1086	14.0	11.2	
Wymondham	1303	9.3	7.7	
		8.4	5.0	
Bottesford	1276	8.15	7.15	
		7.7	7.3	
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	1219	7.25	6.75	
Breedon	1330	7.15	5.9	
Hallaton	1284	7.1	5.6	
		6.8	3.6	
		6.7	5.5	Great Easton
Mk. Harborough	1208	6.4	6.2	Evington
Loughborough	1222	6.35	6.2	
Seal	1310	5.85	4.4	
		5.8	3.8	
Medbourne	1284	5.6	4.55	
		5.6	4.7	
Kegworth	1289	5.1	4.25	
Kibworth	1221	5.0	4.4	
		4.85	2.6	
Sealford	1303	4.75	3.8	
Lubenham	1327	4.7	4.1	Burbage
Lutterworth	12 th century	4.65	4.15	
		4.6	4.0	
		4.6	4.0	
Rothley	1285	4.6	4.3	
		4.5	3.05	
		4.3	4.0	
Wymeswold	1338	4.25	4.1	
		4.15	3.65	
Glen Magna	1348	4.1	3.65	
		4.05	3.75	Foxton
Hinokley	1086	4.0	3.5	
		4.0	3.4	Enderby
Narborough	1219	3.25	2.9	
Waltham	1225	3.4	2.8	
Belton	1244	1.95	1.85	
Croxton Kerrial	1247	3.6	3.3	
Castle Donnington	1278	3.5	3.5	
Bagworth	1285	1.35	1.125	
Market Bosworth	1285	2.85	2.5	
Arnesby	1292	3.34	2.85	
Mountsorrel	1292	3.0	2.75	
Whitwick	1293	.75	.75	
Lowesby	1301	1.75	1.34	
Gaddesby	1306	3.9	3.45	
Stapleford	1308	3.8	3.05	
Billesden	1309	2.85	2.65	
Groby	1337	.75	.6	

wealth may have been a result of their contact with the city for trade and commerce. Three more of the places were located in the Welland Valley in South East Leicestershire, (See Fig.2), one of the most densely peopled parts of the country at this period.⁽ⁱ⁾

The evidence would suggest that those settlements with active markets had largely secured the most prominent positions in the country by the 14th century. A century later as the third column in table 1 indicates, the market towns were of relatively greater importance. A revision of the tax was made in 1446 to take into account the changing economic and social circumstances. A rebate of 15²/₄% was granted to Leicestershire and 'within the county the rebate was distributed in such a manner which suggests a minute attention to the particular circumstances of each place'.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ As a result of the changes nine market towns were numbered out of the ten most wealthy settlements. The sole exception was Great Bowden, a village immediately adjacent to Market Harborough.

On the other hand, of course, there were, in 1334, no fewer than 20 places which had been granted market rights paying a tax of less than £4. In some cases this was no doubt a result of being located in a poor part of the county. For example, Market Bosworth was located in the centre of the poor western part of the county in which there was not a single settlement worth more than £4. In other cases, however, it

(i) (Hoskins W.G. *ibid.* p.65.)
(ii) (Hoskins W.G. *ibid.* p.67.)

must have been due to the non-utilisation of the market privileges conferred. For instance, Belton, Lowesby, and Glen Magna paid less than £2 in tax and were located in areas in which other settlements were of much greater value.

The evidence for this early medieval period is, however, very inconclusive and for a more detailed analysis of the situation it is necessary to jump ahead to the 16th century. By this time the situation was far more stable. The creation of new markets had ceased. The scourges of the 14th and 15th centuries, the Black Death and the Plague, for example, were no longer wiping out whole villages. And finally, evidence was more reliable and plentiful.

Between 1572 and 1578 C. Saxton produced his series of county maps based on surveys which he made in the field, on information supplied by earlier cartographers, and on information held in the offices of the county Sheriffs. The map of Leicestershire was published in 1576. No roads were marked in but settlement had received close attention, Saxton having differentiated between ordinary villages and the market towns. Dickinson had accepted the accuracy of Saxton's classification of the market towns in East Anglia,⁽ⁱ⁾ and there is no reason to suppose that the work would be any less accurate for Leicestershire. It will be remembered that 36 places in Leicestershire had received market rights. Saxton's

(i) (Dickinson R.E. op.cit. p.21).

map shows that by the middle of the 16th century only 11 of them were still fulfilling their market functions. (Fig.4.) An analysis of their distribution shows that they were at rather more widely spaced intervals than has been suggested by Dickinson as being the usual distance between market towns at this period.

'Before the industrial era, the market town was the seat of the centralised services for an area within an hour's journey by road - a distance of some three to four miles.'⁽ⁱ⁾ In other words the market towns were spaced at intervals of some six to eight miles.

Leicester with its twice weekly market and its four annual fairs, was a service settlement of some considerable importance located almost in the centre of the county. Towards the periphery of the county in various directions were located other smaller market settlements. To the north east was Melton about 14 miles away; to the south east was Hallaton at the same distance; Harborough to the south was 15 miles distance; Lutterworth and Hinckley were both 12 miles from Leicester; due west lay Market Bosworth at a distance of 11 miles; Ashby de la Zouch was 17 miles away to the north west; and finally Loughborough lay down the Soar valley 12 miles away. There were two other settlements retaining their market functions which did not fit into this

(i) (Dickinson R.E. The Social Basis of Physical Planning. Sociol. Rev. Vol.34. 1942. p.61.)

general pattern. Mountsorrel, in the Soar valley, was almost equidistant from Leicester and Loughborough. Its position will be considered later in the chapter. And beyond Melton Nowbray lay the market town of Waltham.

To return, however, to the general pattern, it is clear that in every case except Leicester-Mountsorrel-Loughborough that the distance between Leicester and each of the market towns was considerably in excess of the 8 miles maximum suggested by Dickinson. It is not inconceivable that these greater distances were due to the more extensive effective sphere of influence of Leicester whose superior marketing and trading facilities would more than compensate for the longer journey necessary to reach the town and thus discourage the development of local marketing facilities.

The validity of this assumption would appear to be borne out by the fact that the distances between the peripheral market towns were much nearer the six to eight mile average in most cases. The following mileages are observed. Melton to Oakham - 9 miles; Oakham to Uppingham - 5 miles; Uppingham to Hallaton - 5 miles; Hallaton to Market Harborough - 7 miles; Harborough to Welford - 8 miles; Welford to Lutterworth - 7 miles; Lutterworth to Hinckley - 10 miles; Hinckley to Market Bosworth - 6 miles; and Market Bosworth to Ashby - 9 miles. In each case the divergence from the customary distance of 6 to 8 miles was nil or else insignificant.

In the north of the county, however, there were two fairly large variations. From Ashby to Loughborough was a

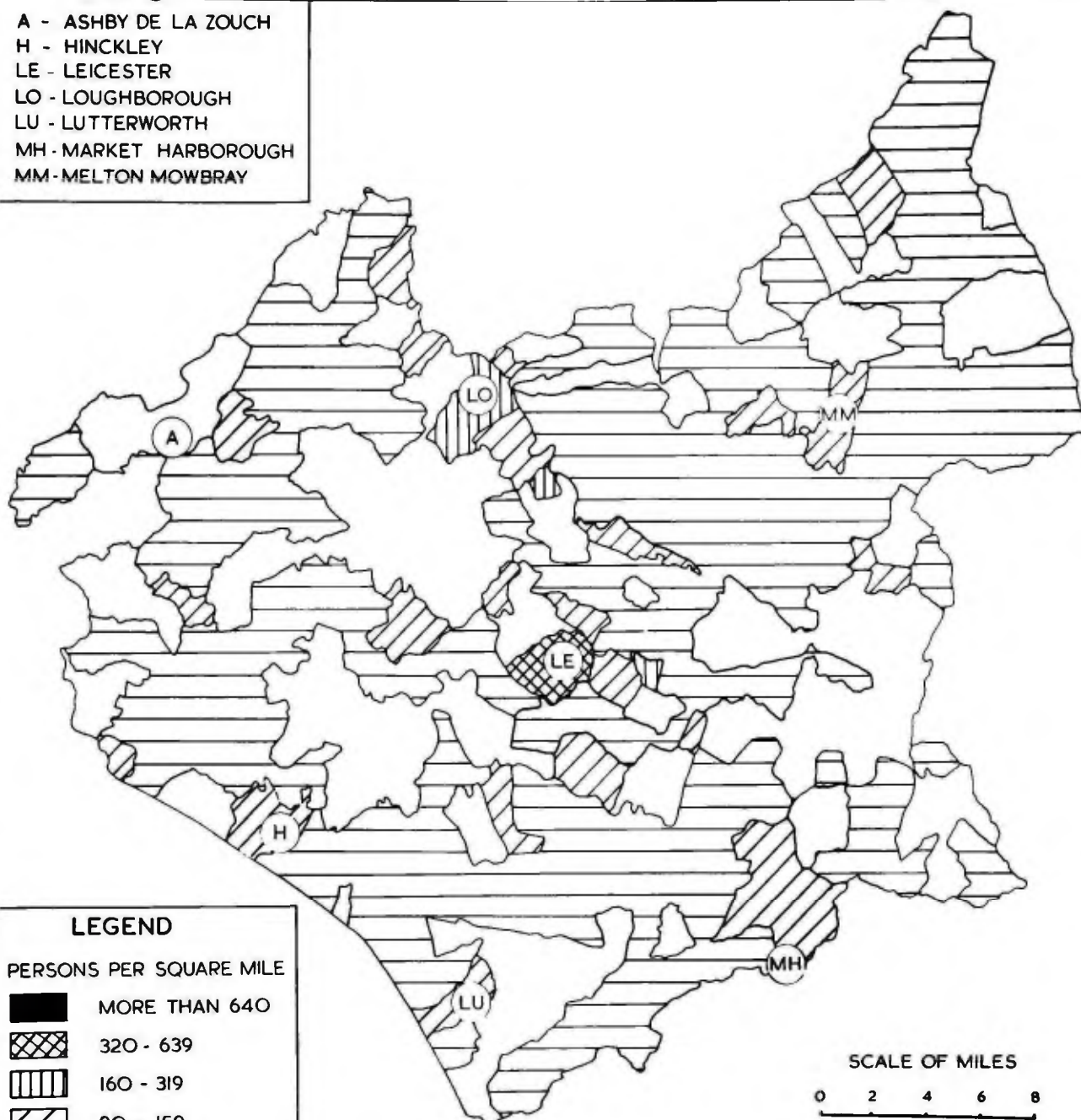
distance of 12 miles and from Loughborough to Melton - 15 miles. In both these cases there seems to be a perfectly reasonable explanation. A glance at Fig. 3 showing the density of population in Leicestershire in 1564 will reveal that over the county as a whole there was a fairly uniform distribution of population with several of the market towns standing out as islands of denser population. There are, however, several areas of a lower density and the largest of these is the Charnwood Forest area to the south east of Loughborough. Hence the demand for a market town between Ashby and Loughborough would not arise. This area of low population would also appear to account for the absence of a market settlement between Leicester and Ashby - a distance of 17 miles. Whitwick, a settlement between Ashby, Loughborough, and Leicester had been granted market rights in 1293 but its failure to attract any trade is seen in the low valuation of the settlement in the 14th and 15th centuries. It paid tax amounting to only 17s.6d. Leland established beyond doubt the purely agricultural status of the settlement in the early 16th century:

'In this forest (Charnwood) is no goode towne nor scant a village. Assceby de la Zouch a market towne, Whitwich castle and village, Lughburow market, Wolvercroft Priorie, joynith on the very borders of it.' (i)

(i) (Smith L.T. (Ed). Leland's Itinerary in England. 1535-1543. Vol.1. London 1907. p.18)

LEICESTERSHIRE: DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION 1564

A - ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH
H - HINCKLEY
LE - LEICESTER
LO - LOUGHBOROUGH
LU - LUTTERWORTH
MH - MARKET HARBOUROUGH
MM - MELTON MOWBRAY



LEGEND

PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE

	MORE THAN 640
	320 - 639
	160 - 319
	80 - 159
	40 - 79
	LESS THAN 40

SCALE OF MILES

0 2 4 6 8

BASED ON 'RETURN OF FAMILIES' TO ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY 1564

FIG. 3.

The map showing the density of population does not indicate such a clear reason for the distance of 15 miles between Melton and Loughborough. In this case it is necessary to look at Fig. 4 showing the distribution of settlements. This brings out very clearly the absence of any nucleated settlement in the area midway between the two towns. No village is more than six miles from a market and, indeed only four, two of them very small ones, are more than four miles from either Loughborough or Melton. Here again, therefore, the absence of population accounts for the greater distance between the markets.

One other feature in the distribution of the markets remains to be explained. That is, the absence of a market settlement in the eastern part of the county. The low density of population as revealed in Fig. 3 again suggests the reason. There was evidently insufficient demand for a market town of any importance. Several settlements, however, lie more than five miles from a market town and, although they are mainly small ones with a population of less than 100, there would be a limited need for service facilities. Referring back to the first diagram on Fig. 2 it will be seen that the village of Billesdon standing in the centre of this area had been granted market rights. The charter dates from 1309. By the 17th century evidence is available showing a small weekly market being held in the settlement. In the 16th century, therefore, it is likely that Billesdon was of some importance as a trading

centre although there was too low a population in the area to justify the holding of a weekly market. Billesdon, therefore, was probably a sub-centre at this period.

In view of the poor state of the roads in the 15th., 16th., and 17th centuries⁽ⁱ⁾ and the relatively wide spacing of the market towns it appears likely that service facilities must also have been available in settlements other than the market towns, perhaps in a series of subsidiary centres similar to Billesdon. Settlement size provides the only evidence of such a feature.

In Fig. 4 is shown the distribution of settlements in size groups with those places of more than 250 inhabitants clearly differentiated. There were only 34 settlements larger than this as shown in table 2. In medieval lowland England two main factors were responsible for the development of larger settlements. Firstly, locally enhanced fertility of the soil allowing a denser agricultural colonisation. This factor would be reflected in a pattern of larger settlements concentrated in a specific area. In Leicestershire this is seen in the group of larger settlements in the Welland Valley stretching from Lubenham to Brighthurst; in the Soar Valley from Syston to Castle Donington; and in the vale of Belvoir from Long Clawson to Bottesford.

Secondly, the concentration of service facilities in a limited number of centrally placed settlements. This is

(i) (Rogers. J.E. op.cit. Vol.4. p.74.)

Table 2

<u>Size of Leicestershire Settlements 1564</u>	
Number of Families in the Settlements	Number of Settlements
More than 100	5
90 to 99	-
80 to 89	4
70 to 79	7
60 to 69	9
50 to 59	9

40 to 49	31
30 to 39	50
20 to 29	75
Less than 20	131

LEICESTERSHIRE : DISTRIBUTION & SIZE OF SETTLEMENTS. 1564.

MS. MOUNTSORREL
BA. BARROW-ON-SOAR
Q. QUORN

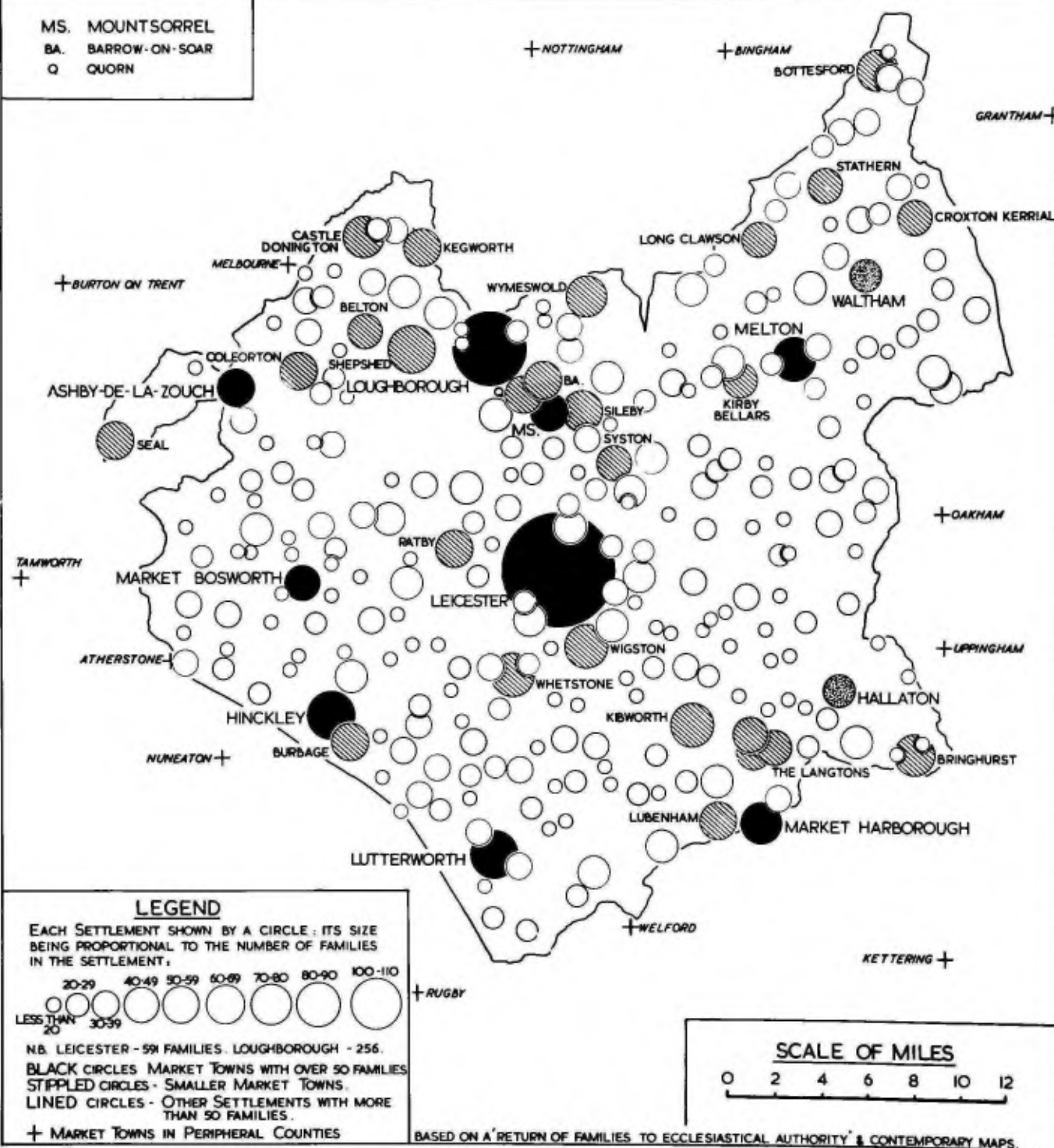


FIG. 4.

brought out clearly in the fact that the market towns are numbered amongst the largest settlements (with but two exceptions) and is especially noticeable in the cases of Lutterworth and Market Bosworth which are the only places with populations exceeding 250 in their respective districts. Subsidiary service centres might, therefore, also be seen amongst the larger settlements.

Kibworth lay almost midway between Leicester and Market Harborough and with a population of over 400 it was the sixth largest settlement of the county. It was granted market rights in 1221, just a few years after the rise of Market Harborough had resulted in the re-orientation of the road from Leicester to the south through the settlement. It did, therefore, have some tradition of trading and in the 16th century it may have been serving as a subsidiary centre for the benefit of settlements to north-east and south-west which were more than an hour's journey away from either Leicester or Market Harborough.

In the north east of the county there was a large area rather more than six miles from the nearest market town. The greater population of Long Clawson, Stathern, and Bottesford suggests that these may have been acting as local service centres. This would appear to be particularly true in the case of Bottesford. It had been granted market rights in 1276 and as has already been demonstrated it was one of the most wealthy settlements in the 14th and 15th centuries. In 1564 the nearest market town was over seven miles away - that is about two hours

journey - and Bottesford must still have been fulfilling some local servicing functions.

In the Soar valley to the south of Loughborough there is a group of settlements with populations above 250. This would appear to be an instance of generally denser population as a result of local favourable conditions for more intensive agriculture. Mountsorrel, though not the largest settlement had evidently maintained its functions as the local trading centre for it was still exercising the rights to a weekly market. Its non-agricultural activities are brought out in Fig. 3 for the density of population in the township is considerably higher than that in any of the neighbouring settlements and is actually the highest in the county with the exception of Leicester. Hence agriculture could certainly not support all the people resident within its bounds. The town owes its importance as a local trading centre to its position on the western bank of the river Soar (Fig.5) where the hills of Charnwood approach very close to the river, thus resulting in the main line of communication passing through the settlement. Thus villages to north and south were put in easy communication with it. The River Soar was also bridged at Mountsorrel by this early date⁽ⁱ⁾ - the only place between Leicester and Loughborough - and hence there would be some concentration of traffic on the town especially from the settlements of Sileby, Barrow and Seagrave on the other bank of

(i) (Russell P. A Leicestershire Road. Leicester 1934. p.25.)

the river.

North-west of Loughborough most of the settlements were large, again reflecting a higher degree of agricultural colonisation and it is impossible to say whether or not the settlements were also subsidiary service centres. It is likely that Castle Donington in the extreme north west, however, was fulfilling some service functions as it and the neighbouring settlements were at a distance of more than eight miles from Loughborough. It had received market rights in 1278 and in later centuries it was to be a subsidiary centre of some importance.

Around the city of Leicester local market centres at Glen Magna, Narborough, Groby, and Rothley (Fig.2.) had died out as the greater influence of the Leicester markets made themselves felt over a wider area. In 1564, however, there were around Leicester four settlements with populations of more than 250 - viz. Syston, Ratby, Whetstone, and Wigston. It is conceivable that their increased population may have been due to their possessing functions as local trading centres for the inhabitants of the surrounding villages unable to make the longer journey into Leicester.

The existence of subsidiary service settlements cannot, however, be pointed to with any degree of certainty when the evidence available is not sufficiently comprehensive. Evidence from the following century, however, would suggest that in any case the trade of the subsidiary centres was of

little importance when compared to that of the market towns.

In the middle of the 17th century tradesmen's tokens were issued following a great shortage of small coins. During the Commonwealth they were apparently issued without any restrictions from the government and thus they came into fairly general use. 'They are, therefore, useful in pointing out the places in which trade was chiefly carried on at this time.'⁽ⁱ⁾ The third diagram of Fig. 2 shows the settlements in which they were issued and the number of tradesmen using them in each town. Except in the Welland valley and in three other villages where the settlement was probably of sufficient size to justify the local trader issuing a token, their issue is limited to those settlements designated as market towns in the 16th century. (plus Billesdon). Of the total of 94 tokens issued by traders in Leicestershire 85 of them originated from the market towns. This item of evidence would indicate the overwhelming importance of the market towns in providing the population with the facilities for exchange and purchasing. It is, therefore, in an examination of the market towns that further investigations into urban-rural relationships in Leicestershire before the Industrial Revolution will be concerned.

(i) North. Tradesmen's Tokens issued in Leicestershire in the 17th Century. Trans. Leic. Arch. Soc. Vol. 1. 1866. p. 106)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE FUNCTION IN THE
LEICESTERSHIRE MARKET TOWNS.

At the end of chapter one the concentration in the market towns of the trader's issuing tokens in lieu of small change was noted. A further glance at Fig. 2 will indicate that a distinction can be drawn between three groups of market towns on the basis of this evidence. At six of the towns only one, two, or three traders issued their tokens; at another five the numbers ranged from seven to twelve; and at Leicester, clearly differentiated, there were 26 such traders.

By 1800 the fortunes of five of the six towns in the first group had severely declined. Their markets still existed in theory for Owen's 'New Book of Fairs' issued in 1772 showed that Billesdon's market day was on Friday; Hallaton's on Thursday; Market Bosworth's on Wednesday; Mountsorrel's on Monday, and Waltham's on Thursday.⁽ⁱ⁾ Other contemporary evidence, however, indicates that they were of but little importance. For example, "At Waltham, the small market which used to be held here is now wholly discontinued."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ The same writer commented that "Mountsorrel is still denominated a market town"⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ implying

(i) (Quoted in the 1st Report of the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls, 1888. p.175)

(ii) (Nichols, J. History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester. 1795-1811. London. Vol.2. Part 1. p.363)

(iii) (ibid. Vol.3. pt. 2. p.1130)

that the 'raison d'etre' for the name had disappeared. Of Market Bosworth he wrote:

"About the year 1730 it was famous as the resort of the neighbouring gentry who came regularly twice a week for pleasure and amusement (and presumably, therefore, also for marketing purposes).....Now Bosworth market is almost in disuse, though situated in the centre of a fertile district....but with Ashby, Hinckley, and Atherstone on three sides of it, and Leicester within reach." (i)

Competition from markets on the periphery of the agricultural district had evidently resulted in the 18th century decline of Market Bosworth as a trading centre. The remaining two - viz: Hallaton and Billesdon - were described as being smaller than the market at Bosworth⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ and thus must have been of but negligible importance.

In 1800, therefore, marketing facilities were concentrated in seven towns. Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley, Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Ashby-de-la-Zouch; in order of precedence according to a contemporary document.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ In the next chapter their status and hinterlands will be detailed but prior to that the location of these towns must be examined and their development as trading and marketing

(i) (ibid. Vol.4. part 2. p.493)

(ii) (Pitt, W. Agriculture of Leicestershire. London 1813. p.318)

(iii) (ibid. p.318)

centres through the centuries briefly traced. This is essential for a real understanding of their importance in the urban hierarchy since 1800 for each of them has a tradition of service function dating from the early days of effective colonisation of the county. This will be readily appreciated from the first column of table 3 which shows that by the beginning of the 13th century all of the settlements had been granted formal market rights. By 1221, when the last of this group of towns secured its market rights, only two other settlements in the county - Waltham and Narborough - had been similarly favoured and these only in the preceeding couple of years. (table 1).

Five of the seven settlements assumed important positions in Anglian times. From their original settlements in Leicestershire on the patches of glacial sands and gravels in the eastern part of the county the Anglian pioneers colonised to the north and the west. Leicester was occupied by the middle of the 6th century - use being made of the site, that had been occupied since pre-Roman times, a mile or so below the confluence of several small streams joining together to form the River Soar. (Fig. 5). Even today there is no bridge across the river in a downstream direction for about eight miles. Because of its position on the river, which probably came to be used as a means of communication with the East coast via the Trent, and because of its central position to the Anglian settlements established on the valley slopes to

Table 3

Status of the Leicestershire Market Towns before 1800						
Town	Date 1st mk.rights granted	Assessed value of the town in		No.of traders issu- ing tokens	Population of the Town	
		1334	1446		1564	1801
Leicester	Before 1086	26.13.6	21.0.2	, 26 ,	2955	16953
Ashby-de- la-Zouch	1219	7. 5.0	6.15.0	9	320	2674 (parish)
Hinckley	Before 1086	4. 0.1	3.9.9	8	500	5070
Lough- borough	1221	6. 7.0	6.3.8	9	1280	4546
Lutter- worth	12th Century	4.13.2	4.3.4	3	530	1652
Market Harboroug	1203	6.8.0	6.1.4	12	390	1716
Melton Mowbray	Before 1086	14.0.0	11.3.4.	7	400	1766

east and west (N.B. Place name evidence of Anglian settlements at Stoughton, Evington, Wigston, Whetstone, Braunstone, Newtown, Cropston, Thurcaston etc. all within a few miles of Leicester.) it would immediately assume the position of trading and marketing centre for the district.

As the Anglian settlers moved northwards from East Leicestershire the marshy valley of the Wreak barred their progress and prevented their colonising this district. (Fig. 5) However, a crossing of the river was effected at the place where Melton Mowbray now stands. This was presumably the lowest suitable crossing place and was also located at the convergence of several small streams providing easy routes up on to the higher land to the north and west. The name Melton is, indeed the Scandinavianised form of the Anglian name 'Middel Tun' (Middle Town) indicating that the settlement was regarded as the focal point for the district, on which trackways from various settlements converged in order to effect a crossing of the valley, and was, therefore, the most appropriate place for the development of a trading settlement. The importance of Melton in this respect would be further enhanced by the peopling of the Wreak valley itself by the Danes in the 9th century.

North and south Leicestershire were occupied rather later in the Anglian period. In the south, the key position held by Lutterworth was presumably amongst the first to be occupied and, from which later daughter settlements were

LEICESTERSHIRE: THE PHYSICAL BACKGROUND.

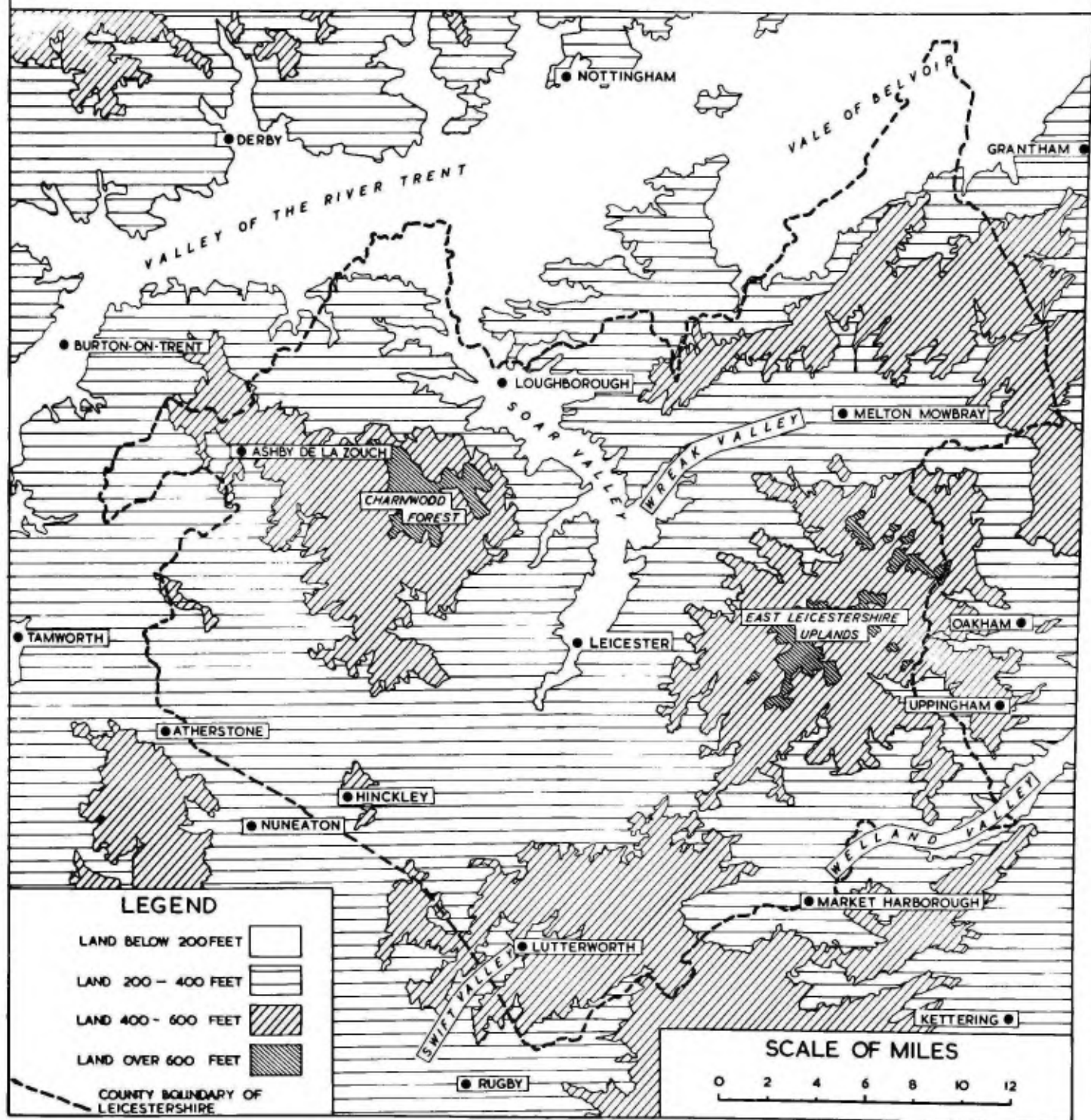


FIG. 5.

initiated. As Fig. 5 shows Lutterworth stands on a ridge of higher land overlooking the River Swift. The Anglian settlers moving northwards from the Avon valley would recognise the importance of such a dry point site for their first settlement in the district. Here too the valley is only a few hundred yards wide whereas further downstream its minimum width is rather more than a mile.

In the north of the county a corresponding position would appear to be occupied by Loughborough. It was located on the navigable Soar, utilised as a means of communication after Leicester had been occupied by the Angles, at a place where higher land to east and west approached quite near to the river. This point may have been the lowest effective crossing place of the Soar before its junction with the Trent. Rempstone, Hoton, Burton, Walton and Belton, all with Anglian place-name endings, stood at the head of streams which flowed down into the Soar in the vicinity of Loughborough and thus we may assume that very early this settlement was the focal point of communication in the district.⁽¹⁾

Hinckley, in south west Leicestershire, also has an Anglian place-name ending. It is located in an area where there are many settlements of Anglian foundation but its position on the edge of an area of higher land which locally

(1) (Information concerning the spread of Anglian settlement obtained from W.G. Hoskin's article "The Anglian and Scandinavian settlement of Leicestershire. Trans.Leic. Arch. Soc. Vol.18. 1934/5. p.110 et seq)

forms the water parting between the streams flowing north-east to join the Soar and those flowing south-west into the Anker suggests initial locational advantages for its development into the most important settlement in this part of the county.

The two remaining market towns were of later origin. Ashby-de-la-Zouch is located in the north-west of the county which was not colonised until the coming of the Danes at the end of the 9th century.⁽ⁱ⁾ There appear to be no inherent advantages in Ashby's position to account for its rise as a market town. At the time of the Domesday Survey the place was worth only 40/- compared with Lutterworth's £7; Melton's £8; and Hinckley's £10,⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ suggesting that at this date it was merely an agricultural village. Its rise as a trading and servicing centre dates from the establishment of a castle in the settlement in the 12th century.

'In the course of a century and a half after this time (Domesday Survey) when the abodes of a few serfs and peasants alone stood there, other dwellings had sprung up; a small hostelry perchance, and a few tradesmen and artisans.....in consequence of the inmates of the castle needing their services, and it gave it (i.e. Ashby) a small degree of importance.'⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

In 1219 Roger la Zouch gained an important privilege for Ashby when he agreed to pay the king a fine of 'one palfrey' for the

(i) (ibid. p.118)

(ii) (Domesday Survey: Translation in Nichols J. op.cit. Vol.1. Part 1. p.i)

(iii) (anon. A History and Description of Ashby de la Zouch. Ashby 1852. p.6.)

rights to a weekly market on the Wednesday and an annual fair on the 'eve, day and morrow of St. Helen'. As Ashby was the first place in the district to be granted market rights the development of the place as a central settlement servicing the other rural communities was now assured. In Ashby's case, therefore, the interest of the lord of the manor in his domain and the grant of market privileges caused the town to develop as a trading centre; that is, the influence of a human factor and not the factor of location initiated Ashby's rise to importance.

However, once the tradition of trading at Ashby-de-la-Zouch had been established the town never relinquished the function with which it had been endowed. In 1261 the right to hold a weekly market was confirmed, presumably after a review of the situation, as an entirely new charter was granted which changed the market day from Wednesday to Saturday. By the following century Ashby was assessed as one of the most prosperous places in the county (see table 3) and in the tax re-assessment of 1446 the settlement was allowed only a 7% rebate, less than a half of the rebate for the county as a whole, suggesting continuing improvements in the town's relative prosperity and importance. In 1373 an exemplification of the grant for the Saturday market was obtained and in 1474 the expansion of the town's trading activities was reflected in the grant of two more annual fairs. In 1617 rights to two more fairs were conferred.⁽ⁱ⁾

(i) (Scott W. The Story of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Ashby 1907. p. 217.
 Anon. History and Description of Ashby de la Zouch.
 Ashby 1852. p. 32.)

Thus in the early 17th century a weekly market and five annual fairs offered adequate trading facilities to the agricultural community of the district. The retailing and service facilities available were apparently also of comparable importance for in the mid 17th century no fewer than nine traders in the town issued tokens. (see Fig. 2.)

In contrast to the development of Ashby from an agricultural settlement to a market centre was the initial foundation of Market Harborough specifically as a service settlement. Prof. W.G. Hoskins believes that it is almost certain that the town originated as a half way settlement between the important medieval towns of Leicester and Northampton. These towns are more than 30 miles apart - a greater distance than could be comfortably covered in a day by a royal procession - and it is possible that a resting place was established at the crossing place of the river Welland by Royal edict.⁽ⁱ⁾ The first mention of the existence of the settlement did not occur until 1176 but at the beginning of the 13th century it was granted market rights thus indicating the immediate recognition of the importance of the settlement as a trading town accessible from both banks of the fertile Welland valley.

'The founding of the new town had all sorts of repercussions on the surrounding countryside by altering the lines of local trade and trade routes.'⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (Hoskins, W.G. The origin and rise of Market Harborough. Trans. Leic. Arch. Soc. Vol. 25. 1949. p. 58)
 (ii) (ibid. p. 62.)

The directions of the main routes through the district were re-oriented to pass through the town. From the south the roads from Kettering and Northampton joined at Harborough to cross the Welland. From the east the road from Rockingham was diverted to pass through Market Harborough. And from Leicester a new route to the south was constructed to pass through the town. (i) Thus the advantages of a river crossing site making it the focal point of route-ways from all directions, combined with its location in a very prosperous part of the country ensured that Market Harborough's development as an important trading and servicing centre should not be long delayed.

However, the alteration in the orientation of local trade would not be a sudden process. Traditions of local marketing which had been developing over a couple of centuries or more would not be broken in a period of a few years. In the 'fifteenth and tenth' tax returns of 1334, to which reference has been made in the previous chapter, the town of Harborough paid a tax of £6. 8. 6d. while Hallaton, a few miles away to the east-north-east, and whose important trading functions had been recognised in 1284 by the grant of two weekly markets and four annual fairs, paid a tax exceeding £7. (see table 1.) This evidence would suggest that even 150 years after Market Harborough's foundation that it was still of less importance than its neighbouring market centre. In the 14th and 15th

(i) (ibid. p.63.)

centuries, however, the situation was reversed. In the poll-tax returns of 1381 only 109 inhabitants of Hallaton were taxed compared with 154 in Market Harborough.⁽ⁱ⁾ In the re-assessment of the 15th. and 10th. tax in 1446 Market Harborough emerged as the more prosperous settlement. The rebate allowed to Market Harborough was only 5% of the 1334 amount, while at Hallaton the rebate was over 20% - a percentage well in advance of the average of 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ for the county as a whole. Hallaton had evidently suffered a serious setback in the 14th. century and one of the contributory causes must have been the growing importance of Market Harborough as a competing trading centre for the district. By the middle of the 16th century Market Harborough was twice as populous as Hallaton (see Fig.4) and in the 17th century 12 of Harborough's traders issued their tokens compared with only 2 in Hallaton. (Fig. 2) Finally, as we saw at the beginning of the chapter, by 1800 the importance of Hallaton as a trading centre was, to all intents and purposes, extinct.

We have now examined the initial location of the seven settlements which centuries later were to assume dominant positions in the urban-hierarchy of the county. In the cases of Ashby and Market Harborough we have traced through their development as market towns following the special circumstances of their development as trading centres. It is, however, necessary to return to a consideration of the other five towns

(i) (ibid. p.68).

which it has been suggested were located at sites giving a degree of centrality by virtue of the features of the physical background and examine the extent to which recognition was given to their advantages of location for local trade and servicing functions.

The date of the commencement of the market in Leicester is not known⁽ⁱ⁾ but it most probably preceeded the date of the choice of Leicester as a shire capital in the early 10th century by which Leicester assumed the functions of a garrison town for an area within 15 to 20 miles radius. The choice of Leicester for this function indicates its greater locational advantages when compared with those of Loughborough or Melton, for example.

In the medieval period, however, there is much concrete evidence of the increasing trading privileges conferred on the town. New fairs were granted by Royal charter on several occasions,⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ and by the mid 16th century five or six fairs were annually held in the town; very adequate evidence of the prominence of the town as a trading and marketing centre, for at this period "the internal trade of the country was mainly carried on in the great fairs."⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ It was certainly at the fairs that the exchange of live-stock would mainly take place and thus it was necessary to have a fair at each season of the year in order to provide a comprehensive service to

(i) (see above. p. 56)

(ii) (Billson, C.J. Medieval Leicester. Leicester 1920. p.112 et.seq.)

(iii) (Rogers, J.E. A History of Agricultural and Prices in England. London. 1866. vol.4. p.153)

agriculturalists in the hinterland. Leicester by the 16th century could offer such a range of fairs.

The weekly markets were, however, not without significance for it was by means of these that the inhabitants of the town or city secured their food supply and the rural inhabitants disposed of their surplus perishable products. Billson makes the following comments on the Leicester markets in the medieval period:

'From a very early time the country people who lived near Leicester were accustomed to bring their produce for sale in the High Street of the Borough....A cross was standing there in the 13th century....At the beginning of the 14th century a weekly market was in vogue every Wednesday about this cross. In the reign of Henry 8th. (early 16th century) bread was also sold there on Fridays and the country people would bring in their eggs and butter on that day as well as on Wednesday....A very ancient market was held at Leicester on Saturdays in the present market place which locality was known, as early as 1298, as the Saturday market.....The old special markets mentioned in the records of the Borough are the grain market, the bean market, the sheep market, the swine market, and the cattle market, and in later times the horse fair and the wool market. The hay market was always held outside the walls, on account of the impossibility of waggons loaded with hay passing under

the gateways. In the Saturday market the butchers had their shambles....A fish market was existing in the 14th century. There was also a housewife's market and a draper's market. In the Saturday market the goods were generally exposed to the weather on open stalls but in 1440 a market house was built in which the butchers shambles were set up and stalls for clothiers and other tradesmen."(i)

This detailed account of the wide variety of markets held in Leicester in medieval times is surely adequate proof that Leicester was offering all the facilities for marketing which could be required by the population of the hinterland and there can be no doubt that the locational advantages inherent in the position of Leicester were being fully utilised.

It should, however, be pointed out that by the 15th century Leicester had become something more than merely a market town for a hinterland of some seven or eight miles radius. Chapman comments:

"The fairs and markets though essential to the prosperity of the town were not its chief source of wealth. This was to be found in the wool and leather trades."(ii)

Both these trades depended on more extensive contacts with the countryside than would be given by means of the local marketing hinterland. Wool was drawn in from a larger area for sale and transfer to other parts of the country and in 1617 Leicester

(i) (Billson C.J. op.cit. p.117-118)

(ii) (Chapman D. Wealth and Trade of Leicester in the early 16th Century. Trans.Leic.Arch.Soc. Vol.25. 1947. p.68)

was made a staple town for the sale of wool;⁽ⁱ⁾ the processing of hides and leather, in which industry 21% of the Freemen of the city were engaged in 1524,⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ would demand a larger supply of skins than would be available from the local hinterland of the city. These facts would suggest that by the 16th century Leicester was an important regional centre as well as a local marketing town and this would, of course, differentiate it from the other six towns of the county and provides further evidence of the superior advantages of its location,

A Melton Mowbray historian offered the opinion that:

'Early in the 11th century, Melton....was of sufficient importance to have conferred upon it a chartered market which was held upon Tuesdays as at present.'⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

As in the Domesday survey only about 50 places in the whole of the country were specifically mentioned as possessing market rights then this claim for the early importance of Melton is justified and the town was no doubt providing the trading facilities required by the population of the neighbourhood at that period. The privilege of a market was renewed in 1323 when Edward 2nd. granted:

'a weekly market on Tuesdays and two fairs; one on the Tuesday in Whitsun week and two days after; and another on the eve, day, and morrow of St. Lawrence and eight days after.'^(iv)

(i) (ibid. p.72.)

(ii) (Thompson J. The History of Leicester to the end of the 17th century. Leicester 1849. p.345)

(iii) (Ward Rev.J. History of Melton Mowbray. Melton Mowbray 1889 Introduction.)

(iv) (Nichols.J. op.cit. Vol.2.Part 1. p.242)

The grant of these rights confirmed Melton's continuing importance as a central settlement in medieval times and the two additional fairs, which had previously not been recorded, offered facilities for special sales of stock in the spring and the autumn. Table 3 shows that in the 13th and 14th centuries Melton was second only in wealth to Leicester and this too must have reflected its importance as a trading centre.

It is probable that at Hinckley a market was being held at the time of the Domesday survey although no specific mention was made of this fact. The Survey, did, however, show a thriving settlement in which dwelt 42 villeins, 8 bondmen, and 16 bordars thus giving a total population of several hundred - considerably larger than Melton Mowbray. In addition, Hinckley was worth the sum of £10, an amount only exceeded by Leicester. This circumstantial evidence would lead one to suppose that the settlement was of considerable local importance at a very early date as a trading and marketing centre.

The early medieval period was, however, one of decline for Hinckley, perhaps as a result of a series of serious epidemics. In 1334 the town only paid £4 in tax, as table 3 shows the lowest figure of any of the seven towns. It had not recovered by the 15th century for by then the amount of tax paid dropped by about the same amount as the county average, whereas in the other market towns the fall in value was proportionately less. By 1485 ,

"The town was in an unsatisfactory state. The profits from

the market tolls and the fair had ceased."⁽ⁱ⁾

In the middle of the following century, however, Edward 6th. granted a new weekly market and annual fair to the town and with this privilege the settlement was able to reassert itself as a trading centre. By the time of the population return of 1564 there were 100 families in the town making it one of the largest settlements in the county; Saxton's map of 1576 definitely shows it as a market town; the fair at Hinckley is spoken of by Justice Shallow in Shakespeare's Henry 4th, and W. Burton, after his journey through Leicestershire early in the 17th century, had this to say of Hinckley:

'The market is held upon the Monday, which is exceeding good, and for selling of corn, cattle, horses, swine, and all manner of other vendible things in an inland town, inferior to none in the whole country. The old fair day is upon the 15th August and of late, divers new fairs have been purchased thereto.'⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The 'divers new fairs', which Burton referred to, were held on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. Mondays after Epiphany for horses and cattle; others on Easter Monday, Club Monday, and Whit Monday, and a further special fair for cheese on the Monday after October 28th. Thus, for eight Mondays in the year special sales were held, suggesting a town of considerable note for its agricultural connections.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (Francis H.J. History of Hinckley. Hinckley 1930. p.59)

(ii) (Burton W. The Description of Leicestershire in 1622. London 1777. p.223)

(iii) (Nichols J. op.cit. vol.4. Part 2. p.669.
Francis H.J. op.cit. p.78)

These various items of evidence add up to indicate that during the latter half of the 16th century there was a complete reversal of the process of decay which had effected the town for the previous 200 years. During this time neighbouring markets at Bosworth, Atherstone, Nuneaton, Narborough, and Lutterworth must have extended their influence in the direction of Hinckley but the fact that the town so speedily recovered its importance as a marketing centre indicates that the advantages of the town's location, which had early led to its selection as a place of some importance, was still exerting a powerful influence when the inhabitants of the town were able to take advantage of them.

Lutterworth's market rights were granted in 1199 by King John; that is, in the period immediately following the Domesday Survey. At the time of the survey the manor was worth the sum of £7 which compared very favourably with the £8 value attached to Melton Mowbray. By 1272, according to Thompson, the town had achieved considerable progress for:

'There were 25 burgesses, free of suit of the county and hundred, who had their own independent town court.

Hence Lutterworth was at this time a borough in its simplest form and had its markets and fairs. '(i)

In 1414 the privilege of the market and fair were renewed. With these facilities Lutterworth continued through the

(i) (Thompson, J. Secular History of Lutterworth.
Trans. Leic. Arch. Soc. Vol. 4. 1878.
p. 159)

medieval period to serve the inhabitants of the surrounding area. It was but a sparsely peopled area - see Fig. 3 and Fig. 4 - and the lack of demand was perhaps the reason why no more fairs were granted to the town. In 1622 Burton wrote of the town:

'It is situated in an exceedingly good soil, and is very much frequented....having also a good market upon the Thursday, to which is brought exceeding good corn in great abundance, and all other commodities such as the country affords.'⁽ⁱ⁾

Thompson was of the opinion that the town "made progress as a market for agricultural producing during the 16th century and subsequently"⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ presumably with an increase in the population of the hinterland. In 1694 the rights for two additional annual fairs were granted to the town. In the mid 17th century, however, it should be remembered that only three tradesmen in the town issued their tokens compared with from 7 to 12 in the other market towns. Perhaps here is an indication of the relative importance of Lutterworth as a trading town at that period.

Loughborough was the last of the seven settlements to formally receive the right to the privileges of a market and fair. The rights were first conferred in 1221 but then only for the lifetime of the lord of the manor. However, in 1227, before the death of the lord a new grant was made suggesting

(i) (Burton W. op.cit. p.170)
(ii) (Thompson J. op.cit. p.163)

that the earlier temporary grant had been successful. On this occasion there was no time limit attached to the privilege. The need for the improvement of marketing facilities in this part of the county - the nearest settlements with privileges being Ashby, Melton and Leicester, each more than 12 miles away - was again recognised when in the following year another fair was granted to Loughborough. In the century that followed market and fair rights were granted to many places in the vicinity of Loughborough; viz: Mountsorrel, Belton, Breedon, Castle Donington, Kegworth, Rothley, and Wymeswold. Had these been successful then they most certainly would have been so at the expense of the trading activities of Loughborough. They were apparently, not so, however, for within a couple of centuries the rights were no longer utilised except in the case of Mountsorrel, on the main road between Leicester and Loughborough. The failure of these places to establish successful markets is some indication of the influence of Loughborough in the district. With the advantages of nodality, accessibility, and a period of 100 years in which it possessed the monopoly of local market rights the influence of Loughborough would have become very pronounced. A tradition of looking to the town for marketing and trading facilities had been established and in the town there would have developed certain ancillary services impossible to provide in the other smaller centres. The markets in the

smaller settlements, therefore, stood little chance of usurping the position achieved by Loughborough.

By the beginning of the 16th century, when Leland passed through the town, it had advanced considerably for he was able to record that:

'The towne of Lugburow is yn largeness and goode building next to Leicester of al the markette townes in the shire, and hathe in it a 4 faire strates or so welle pavid' ⁽ⁱ⁾

The population returns of 1564 indicated that it had a population of about 1250, twice that of the next largest market town. This was partly a reflection of its position in a fertile agricultural district in which the population was higher than the county average, thus necessitating a large number of tradesmen and craftsmen in the town. However, at this time Loughborough 'also flourished by its trade in wool; many merchants of the staple of Calais resided here'. ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ This function would, of course, as in the case of Leicester, be related to a wider hinterland than the marketing area of the town, but after 1617 this function of the town would disappear for then the staple towns were fixed by royal decree, and Loughborough was not numbered amongst them. Its markets and its relations with the local hinterland would then determine the prosperity of the town. In both these respects Loughborough's position appeared to be good for Burton was able to write of the town:

(i) (Smith, L.T. (Ed.) Leland's Itinerary in England. 1535-43. London 1907. Vol.1. p.19)
 (ii) (Fletcher, Rev.W.G. Historical Handbook to Loughborough. Loughborough 1881. p.26)

'It is reputed to be one of the principal markets in the shire; to which is brought great store of corn (and all other commodities) from the adjacent parts.'⁽ⁱ⁾

Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Lutterworth and Loughborough, therefore, all exhibited continuing functions as trading centres right from the time when they first achieved market status. The fact that they withstood competition from various other places also favoured with market rights indicates that their advantages of location, described earlier in this chapter, were of importance in ensuring their development through the centuries. Only in the case of Hinckley was there a break in the town's function as a market centre and here, after a lapse of a couple of centuries in early medieval times, probably as a result of serious epidemics, the town's locational advantages for local trade and marketing quickly re-asserted themselves so that Hinckley became the leading agricultural centre of south-west Leicestershire.

(i) (Burton, W. op.cit. p.164)

CHAPTER THREE.

THE MARKET TOWNS AND THEIR SPHERES OF INFLUENCE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

'Much the same routine of life and labour existed at the commencement of the nineteenth century as prevailed in 1645' commented one of Lutterworth historians.⁽ⁱ⁾ In chapter two the development of trading and marketing facilities in Lutterworth, and in the other market towns of the county, through to the 17th century were discussed. By 1800 there must have been an intensification in the use made of these facilities occasioned by the agricultural revolution which had brought about an increase in the productivity of the land, and by the greater need for exchange between town and country as a result of the 18th development of the urban population. However, the functions of the market towns remained essentially the same, for in 1800 large scale industrial development had not unduly complicated the picture of urban settlement in Leicestershire.

This, however, is not to suggest that industry found no place in the economic life of the county. In Leicester and Hinckley in particular it had become quite important. In Leicester, as a result of the introduction of the stocking frame and the manufacture of hosiery, the population had increased from 4,000 to 16,000 in the course of the 18th. century, and in Hinckley, in 1782, it was estimated that over 2,000 of the

(i) (Dyson A.H. Lutterworth. London. 1913. p.99)

inhabitants of the town were employed in stocking manufacture.⁽ⁱ⁾

These two settlements, however, with the addition of Loughborough and certain villages in the neighbourhood of these three towns were the only ones whose populations had been inflated by industrial expansion. In 1801 the market towns of the county were numbered amongst the ten largest settlements. Moreover, apart from the market towns there were only ten other settlements with a population exceeding 1000.

In the latter half of the 18th century Leicester made very great progress.

'It may be considered as the dawn of the modern era....New buildings, new institutions, new industries now gradually arose.'⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Easier means of communication contributed to the progress of the city and, as is shown in Fig. 6, by 1800 most of the main roads leading in to the city were already turnpiked. These new means of communication, however, in addition to contributing to the material progress of the city, also brought city and countryside much closer together and during this period Leicester's functions as a central settlement received considerable stimulus. Towards the end of the century five new fairs (additional to the seven already held) were established by the Corporation for cattle and sheep⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ and a

(i) (Nichols, J. History and Antiquities of Leicestershire. 1795-1811. London. Vol.4. p.669)

(ii) (Fielding Johnson, T. Glimpses of Ancient Leicester. Leicester. 1895. p.231)

(iii) (Billson, C.J. Medieval Leicester. Leicester 1920.p.46)

LEICESTERSHIRE ROAD NETWORK 1801

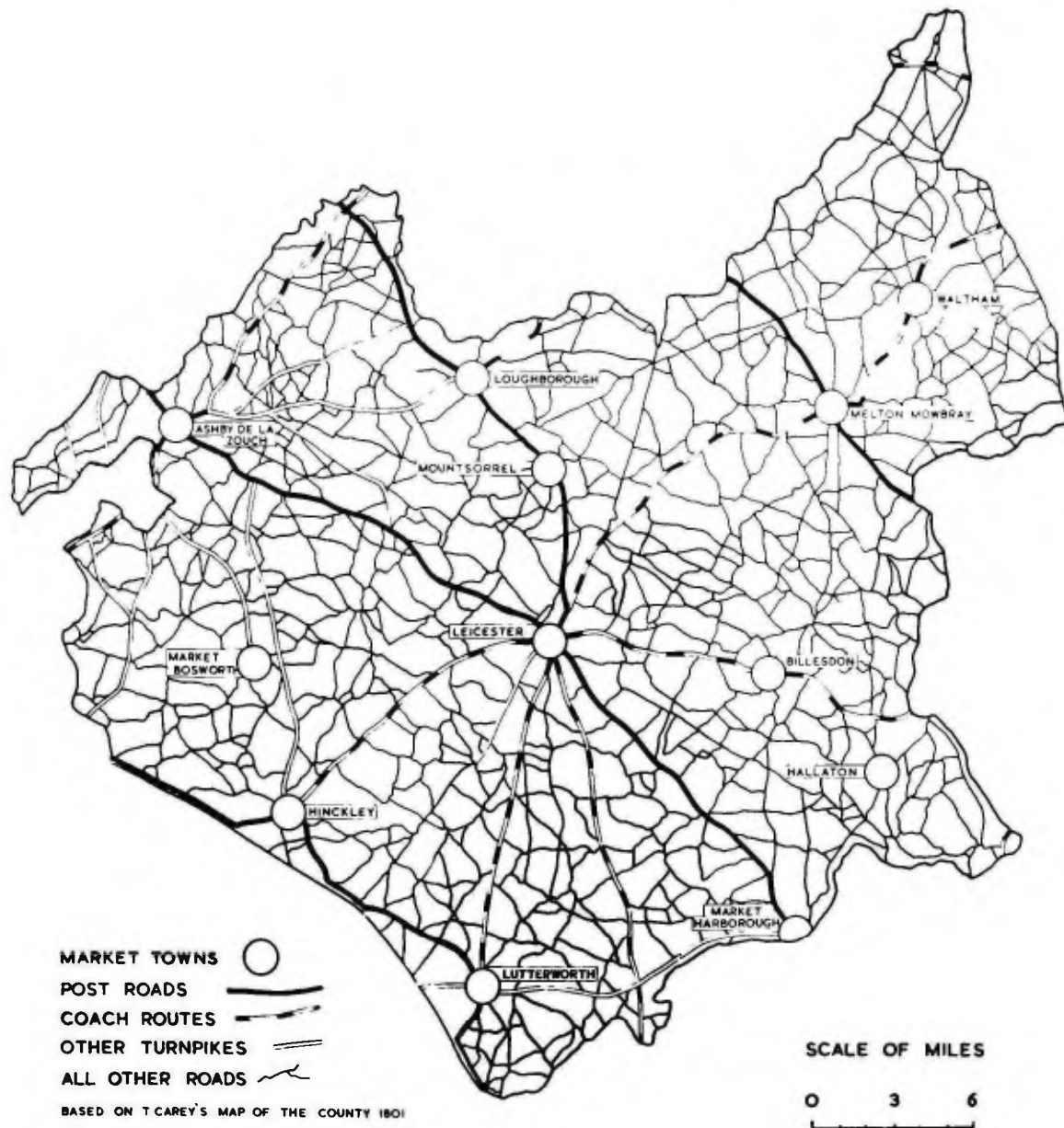


FIG. 6.

regular beast market was established for the first time.

'The cattle market was mentioned in 1341 and held in the Saturday market until 1597 when it was moved. No regular beast market, however, seems to have been established until 1763 when the Corporation made an order "that a cattle market shall be opened on every Wednesday hereafter in this borough, for the sale of fat and lean cattle." (i)

This venture must have been a reflection of an increased demand for such a weekly facility for formerly it had been at the less frequent fairs that the sale of livestock had taken place. However, Leicester fairs were still of immense importance for in 1791 it is recorded:

'The fairs in Leicester are upon a large scale, particularly in the articles of cheese, sheep and cattle. Smithfield market, on its greatest days, bears no sort of proportion to the beasts shown in Leicester at two or three fairs in the year.' (ii)

The state of the markets and fairs in the other six market towns of the county will be briefly examined.

For Melton Mowbray Nichols was able to record:

'The market is held here every Tuesday in a small, neat square and is well supplied with provisions....The great and steady support of the markets is, however, the show

(i) (ibid. p.122)

(ii) (Universal British Directory of Trade and Commerce.
Vol. 3. London 1791. p.585)

of cattle every fortnight, the most considerable in this part of England.'(i)

A fortnightly show of cattle at this early date was of considerable significance and probably arose from the fact that at this period cattle reared in the north of England and Scotland, and eventually destined for the London market, were fattened on the pastures of the Melton district. This would create a demand for marketing facilities throughout the year and the town prospered accordingly from the trade. The popularity of the market was no doubt enhanced in 1794 when the feoffees of the Town Estate leased the tolls of the markets and fairs from the lord of the manor and 'so effectively opened a free access to them.'(ii)

In addition the rise of Melton as the centre for the 'Hunt' would enhance the popularity of the produce market for the prices realised were higher than normal during the hunting season from November to April.

Writing at the beginning of the 19th century, Harrod described the preceeding couple of decades in Market Harborough as a time of "halcyon days"(iii) - a description reflecting the improvement and increase in the trade of the town. Up to 1750 only one fair - the ancient chartered fair - had been held in the town. In that year, however, a new meeting was started in April and by the end of the century had become "a very great

(i) (Nichols, J. op.cit. Vol.2. p.239)
(ii) (ibid. p.239)
(iii) (Harrod, W. The Rise of Market Harborough.
Market Harborough. 1808. p.38)

fair differing in nothing from the other except in length".⁽ⁱ⁾
 In 1772 a winter fair on Jan. 6th. and a summer fair on July 31st. were started and in the same year a day was set aside for a cheese and leather fair. In 1779 an additional meeting was advertised for the 16th February and to be held every year. Nichols commenting on these fairs said that they were "all well attended."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Moreover in the early years of the 19th century three new fairs for the sale of 'fat and lean cattle' were also started.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Thus in the space of a little more than 50 years from the single annual chartered fair held in October, the trade of the town had so expanded that it could boast eight fairs spread throughout the year. Perhaps a contributory cause of the success of the new fairs was that they were free of toll to the lord of the manor who only had the right to charge tolls on the chartered fair and the weekly market. A plan of Market Harborough dating from 1776 (Fig.7) shows that at this date the streets were no longer of sufficient width to accommodate all the stock brought for sale in the town for in the north-west part of the town two fields were set aside - one as the cow fair and the other as the horse fair. The plan also brings out the fact that in the 18th century the town consisted of little more than the 'Great Street', in which additional frontage had been secured by the erection of blocks of buildings in the middle of the street. In the 20 years following the publication of the plan much new

(i) (Nichols. op.cit. Vol.2. p.486)
 (ii) (ibid. p.486)
 (iii) (Harrod, W. op.cit. p.37)

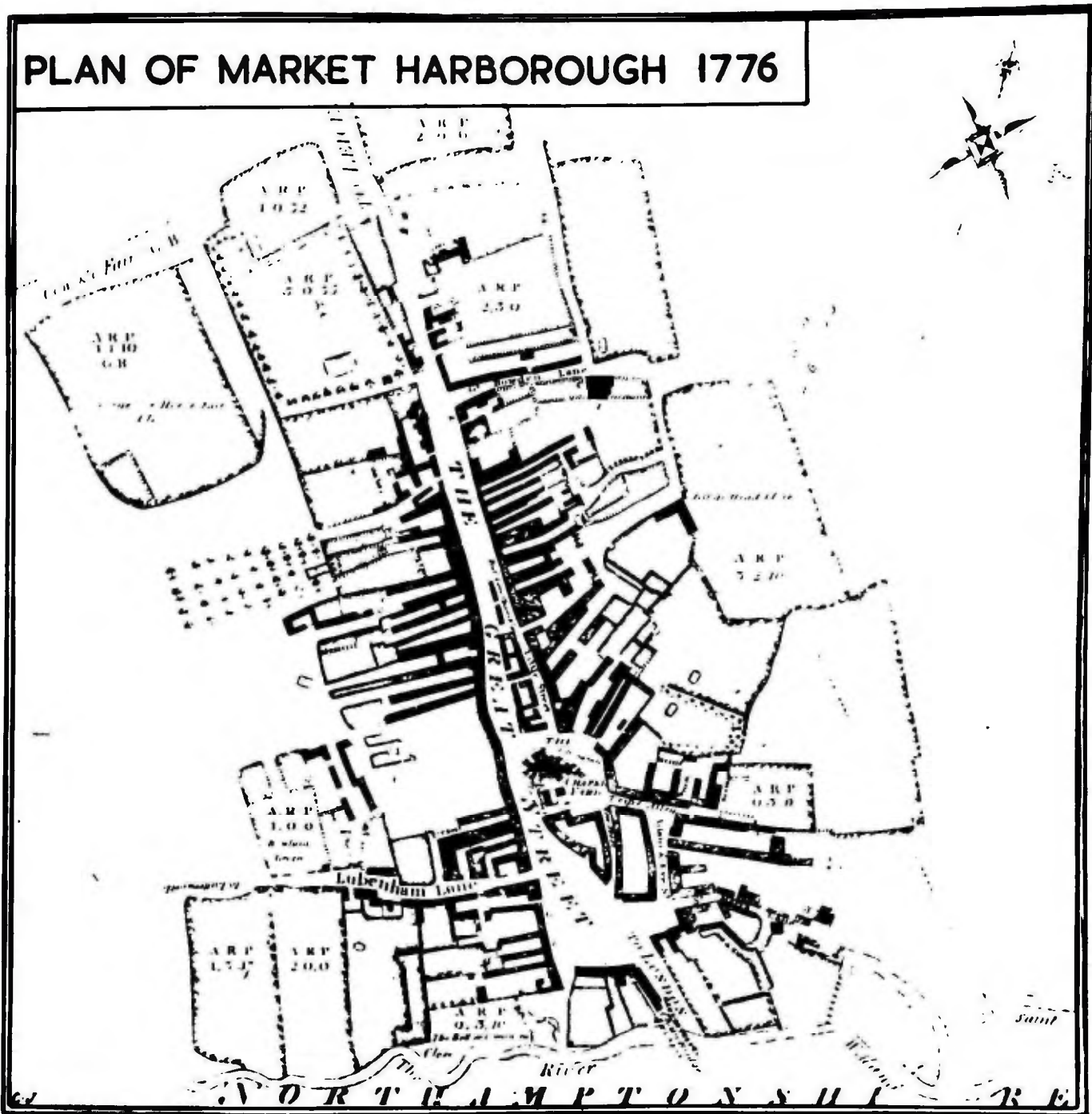


FIG.7.

building took place and the town was 'considerably improved' ⁽ⁱ⁾ - material evidence of its progress as a trading centre and thoroughfare town.

Lutterworth, up to the end of the 18th century, had apparently been the least important of the seven market towns in the county for, as pointed out in the previous chapter, only three of its tradesmen issued tokens, compared with up to 12 in the other settlements. Its facilities, had, however, much improved by the beginning of the 19th century. Between 1770 and 1795 five or six new fairs were started in the town. ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Newspaper reports of the period would suggest that these were successful for in 1774 notice of a fair to be held in Lutterworth on Whit-Tuesday was given and it was stated that it had been held for the first time the previous year, 'when there were more cattle of every kind than at any fair that has been held there for many years.' ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

In Ashby at the end of the 18th century four annual fairs were being held - at Easter, Whitsuntide, in September and in November - and the market was described as 'very plentiful'. ^(iv)

By 1772 the two ancient chartered fairs held in Loughborough had grown to seven held more or less regularly from March to November. Two of the additional fairs had been

(i) (Nichols, J. op.cit. p.488)
(ii) (Nichols, J. op.cit. p. Vol.4.)
Owen's book of Fairs. Quoted in Report of the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls. 1888. p.175)
(iii) (Leicester and Nottingham Journal. 21st May 1774)
(iv) (Nichols, J. op.cit. Vol. 3. p.561)

established in 1730 but the others had never been officially proclaimed⁽ⁱ⁾ and had presumably developed in response to a growing demand from the agricultural community looking to the town for marketing purposes.

At the period when Hinckley was expanding rapidly as an agricultural centre, at the close of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries, seven new fairs had been granted to the town, thus ensuring adequate facilities for the members of the farming community in the district. These facilities were still being utilised at the close of the 18th century. Moreover in 1789 a newspaper notice had intimated the renewal of the ancient Hinckley cheese fair.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

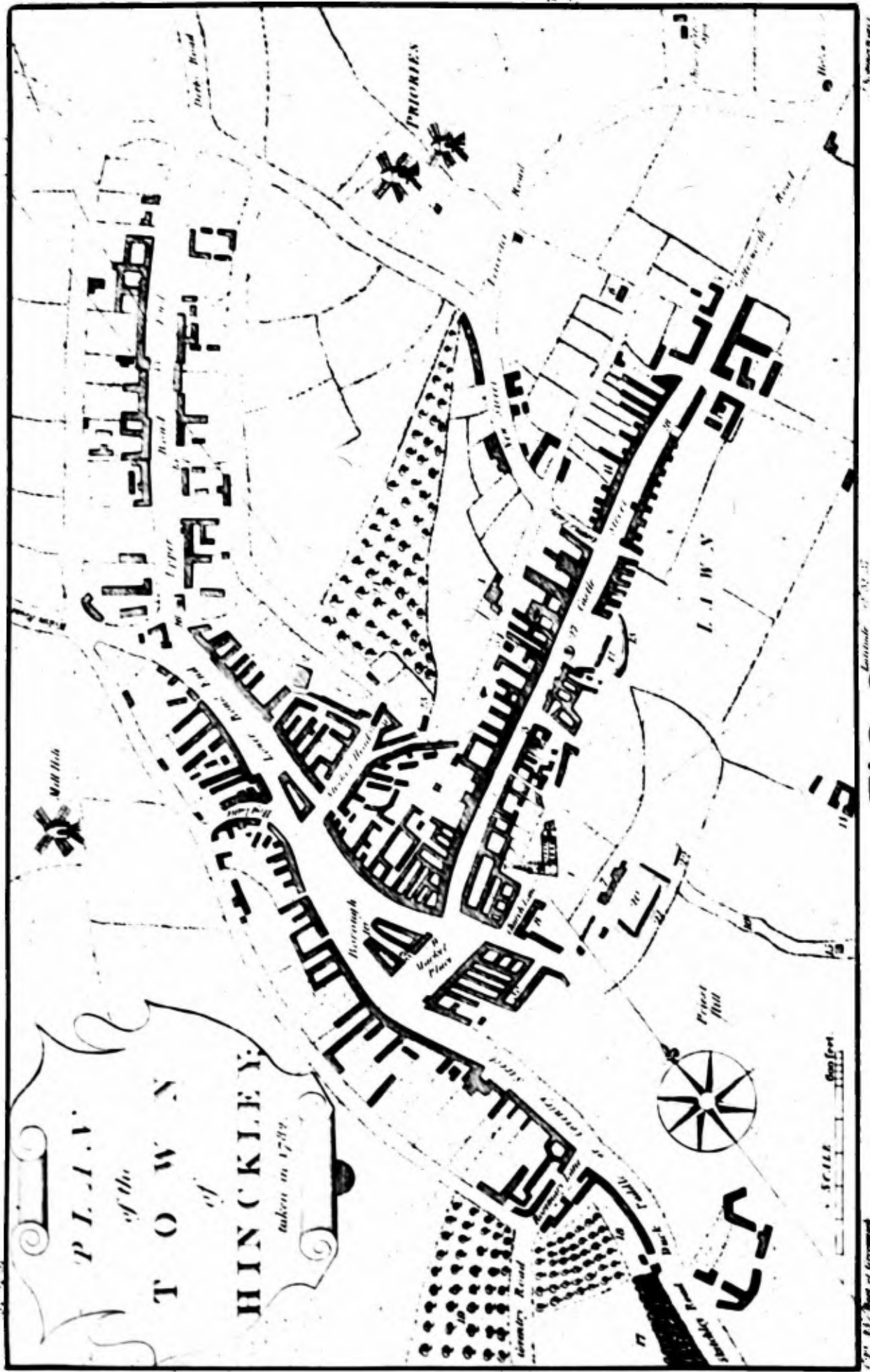
Other evidence of the increasing importance of the markets at Hinckley at this period is seen in the expanding value of the tolls. In 1764 the tolls arising from the corn and hog sales had been presented to the town. In 1781, however, the Burgesses had decided to lease them out for the sum of £3.10s. per annum. 27 years later, in 1808, the lease was resold for the sum of £500;⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ not an inconsiderable advance on the old purchase price, even taking into account the inflation caused by the Napoleonic Wars, and suggesting an expansion in the activities of the market at this period. The market at Market Bosworth had seriously declined in the in the latter half of the 18th century.^(iv) As Hinckley was

(i) (Universal Directory of Trade and Commerce. Vol.3.p.576)
(ii) (Leicester and Nottingham Journal. 9th October 1789)
(iii) (Francis, H.J. History of Hinckley. Hinckley 1930. p.110)
(iv) (See above p. 71.)

the nearest rival market town, a little more than six miles away, it would seem fairly certain that Bosworth's decline would be to Hinckley's advantage and, in fact the superior attractions of Hinckley, which offered a wider choice of fairs during the year and better communications, both locally and nationally, along the several turnpikes serving the town (see Fig.6), were probably among the principal factors causing the decline of Bosworth as a trading centre.

The plan of Hinckley, seen in Figure 8, shows quite clearly that the employment of over 2000 people in the stocking industry did not result in a dense network of building and congestion in the town centre and thus communication with the open county, of such importance when large numbers of cattle, or sheep, or loads of hay and corn, have to be driven into the town, was not impaired. Had it been so, then in all probability the markets and fairs would not have thrived as they did at this period. The hosiery industry, though increasing the population of the town, had not detracted from the settlements functions as a marketing centre.

In the Universal Directory of Trade and Commerce, published in several volumes between 1791 and 1795, were given lists of local tradespeople and craftsmen for all the important market towns in the country. It is unfortunately of but limited value in assessing the facilities offered by the various towns in Leicestershire as the lists are so obviously incomplete. In the case of Hinckley, for example, there is no



P.L.A.V.

of the

T O W N

of

HINCKLEY

taken in 1789.

Fig. 81. Town of Hinckley. Scale 1/2 inch = 1 mile. 1789.

FIG. 8

entry of a butcher, a baker, a draper, a blacksmith, a milliner, or a cutler, all traders and craftsmen who must have had a place in every market town. Similarly, for Melton Mowbray, there is no record of a milliner, a saddler, a shoemaker, or a tanner, etc. On the other hand, the agent for the Directory in Ashby must have been particularly diligent in his work for he had sorted out, amongst others, an engraver, an instrument maker, a nailor and a cornfactor. However, in spite of this varying degree of accuracy, the Directory does bring out the basic similarity of services provided by the market towns (Leicester excluded). The number of services available in each town ranges only between 36 in the case of Hinckley and Melton to 40 in the case of Lutterworth; 51 at Market Harborough; 53 in Loughborough; to a maximum of 59 at Ashby de la Zouch. Each of the settlements was shown to have a bank. The professions of solicitor, doctor, and chemist were represented in each settlement; and no fewer than 12 retailers and 20 craftsmen were found in at least four of the towns. (see table 4).

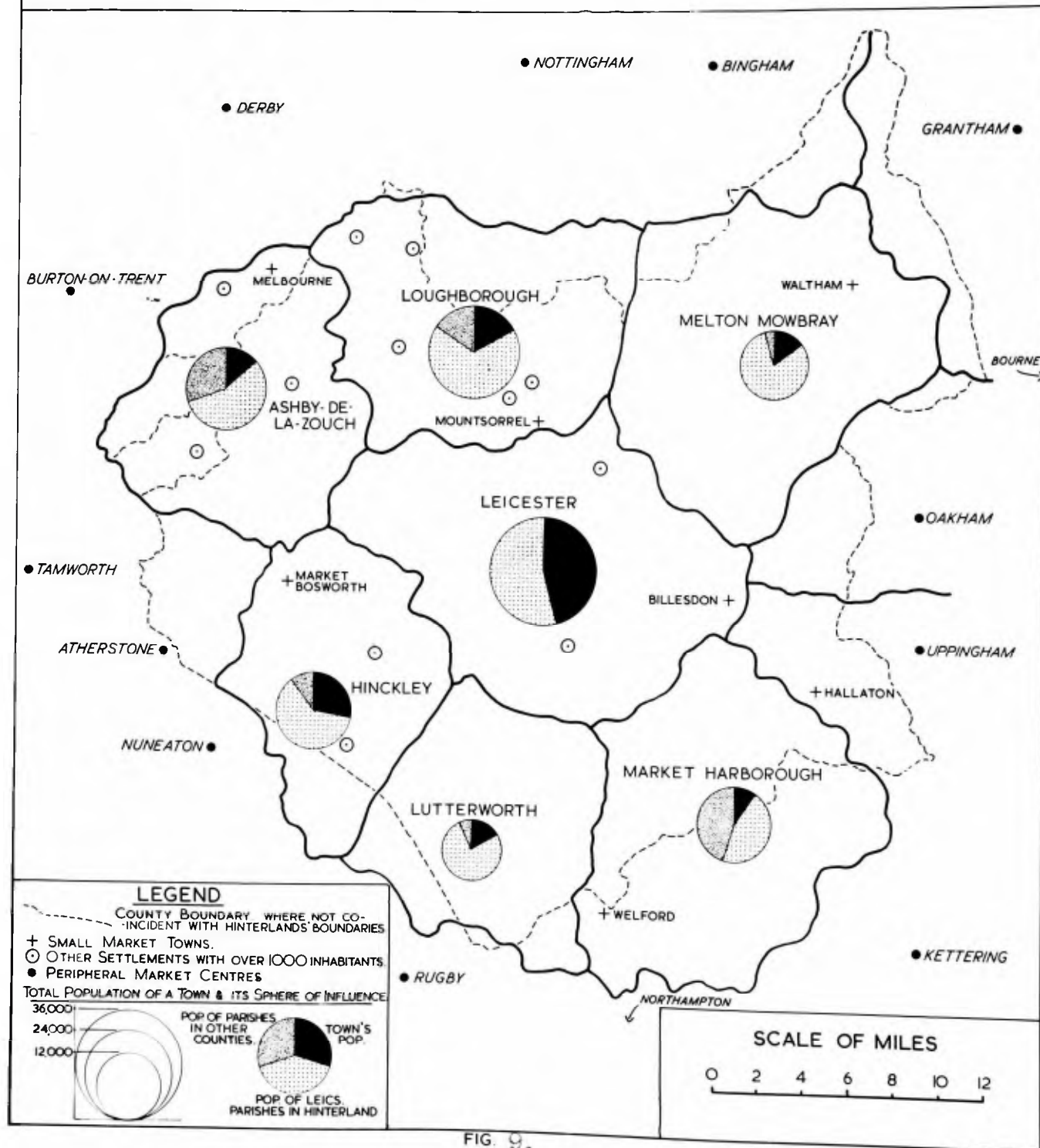
Thus no one of the market towns was outstanding in the retailing and craftsmen's services which it had to offer. Similarly, as we have seen earlier in the chapter, no one of the towns had any great advantages to offer in the way of better markets or more frequent fairs. It would, therefore, seem that in 1800 when, in spite of the development of the turnpikes, communication was not an easy matter (Fig. 6 shows

Table 4

Table showing Service Facilities available in a majority of the Leicestershire Market Towns (excluding Leicester) at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century		
1. Services available in all 6 Towns	a. Retailers	Grocer, Hosier, Shopkeeper, Tallow Chandler, Victualler.
	b. Craftsmen	Brazier, Cooper, Currier, Plumber, Watchmaker
2. Services available in 5 out of the 6 Towns	a. Retailers	Butcher, Baker, Draper, Stationer
	b. Craftsmen	Blacksmith, Breeches Maker, Cabinet Maker, Fellmonger, Joiner, Saddler, Staymaker, Turner, Tailor, Wheelwright.
3. Services available in 4 out of the 6 Towns	a. Retailers	Hatter, Hairdresser, Milliner
	b. Craftsmen	Maltster, Tanner, Woolstapler, Cellow maker

the large areas of the county that were miles from a turnpiked road) that the most important factor determining the choice of a marketing and trading town would be the distance involved in reaching it. There would be a disincentive to travel to a more distant town when the nearer one offered more or less similar facilities for the majority of purposes. In Fig. 9, therefore, the hinterland of each town includes all the settlements from which a visit to another market town would involve a longer journey. Only in the case of those settlements located near the peripheries of the hinterlands of the smaller market towns on the Leicester side does the writer consider that the inhabitants would have been prepared to take a longer journey than was absolutely necessary to reach a place at which marketing could be carried out. Here the longer journey may have been preferred in order to take advantage of the somewhat superior attractions offered by the city of Leicester; for example, the multiplicity of markets; or the larger demand for country products created by the greater locally resident population; and the greater variety of retailers and craftsmen in business in Leicester when compared with the number in one of the smaller towns. (There were about 400 traders and craftsmen in Leicester compared with 90 in Lutterworth). Thus the hinterland of Leicester is probably somewhat under-estimated; or more accurately, that Leicester shares with the smaller market-towns the function of market centre to a number of settlements located a little more than

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE OF LEICESTERSHIRE MARKET TOWNS IN 1800



half the distance from Leicester to the other towns.

The extent of this feature should not be over-estimated, however, for, as Fig. 10 shows, about 70% of the farmers attending Leicester market in 1800 were resident within the hinterland allocated to the city.⁽ⁱ⁾ With Leicester's hinterland almost every village had a farmer attending Leicester market and it is only in the north-east part of the hinterland of Hinckley and the northern part of Lutterworth's hinterland that there are significant numbers of farmers travelling to Leicester. (Fig.10)

For Ashby-de-la-Zouch there is a close correlation between the extent of the hinterland suggested and the extent of the area from which farmers and millers attended the market in 1800.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Out of a total of 58 farmers and millers attending the market, only 3 came from places beyond the hinterland boundary and of these two were from the village of Norton-juxta-Lwyecross just south of the hinterland boundary. Within the hinterland there were farmers from all parts of it with the exception of the extreme west and the extreme north. (Fig.10).

The extent of Market Harborough's hinterland is tentatively confirmed by comparison with a list of villages noted as being within the town's 'district' in a contemporary book.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ For 1815 the post towns of some of the larger

(i) (From examination of a list appearing in the Leicester Journal. September 12th. 1800)
(ii) (List in the Leicester Journal. September 19th 1800)
(iii) (Harrod, W. op.cit. p.97. et.seq.)

THE HINTERLANDS OF LEICESTER, ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH, & MARKET HARBOURGH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH. CENTURY

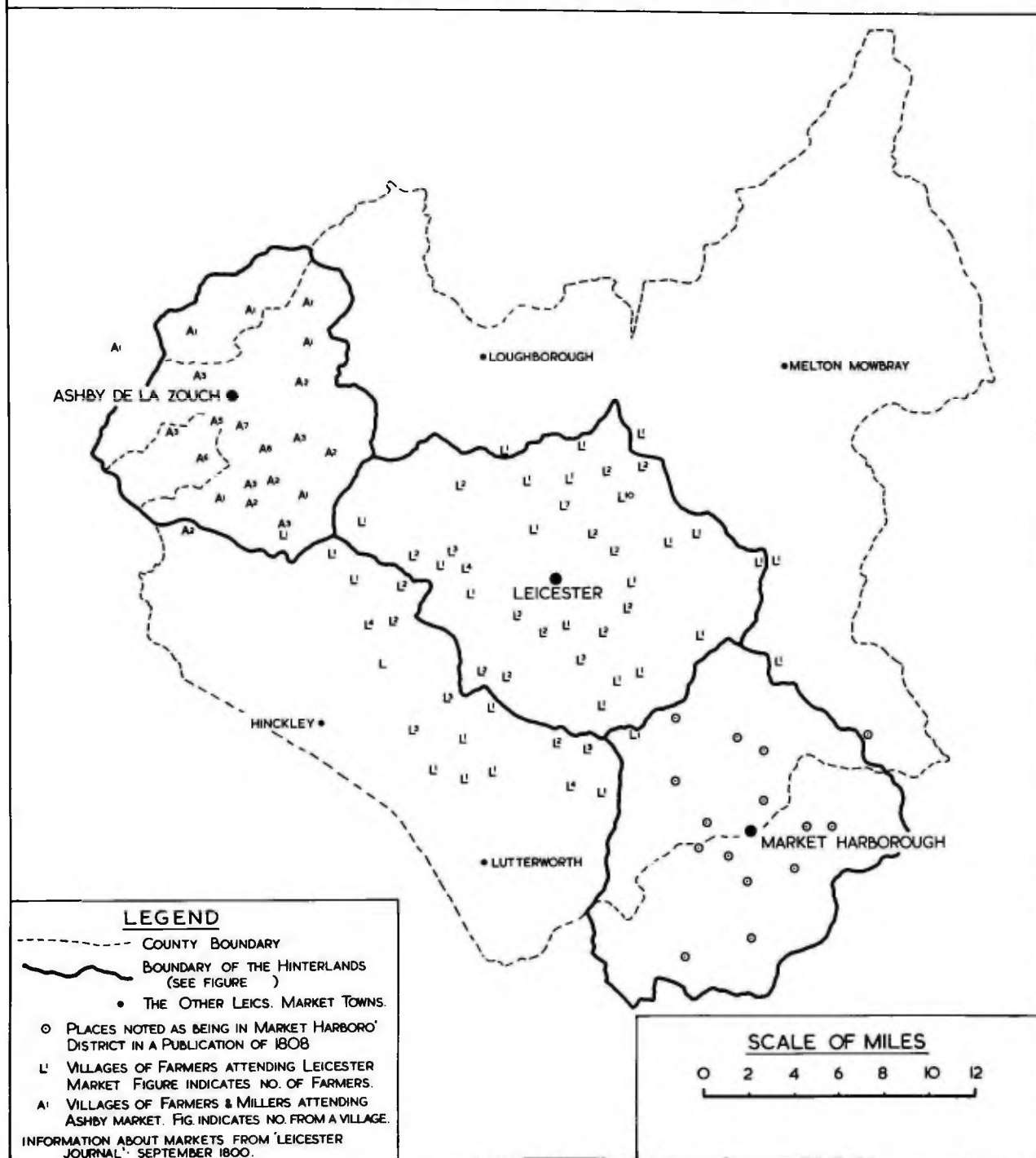


FIG. 10.

halls and residences in the county are given in one of the early county directories.⁽ⁱ⁾ In almost every case the settlement in which the residence is located has been included in the hinterland of its post town. The only exceptions are four places with Leicester as their post towns - viz: Brooksby, Carlton Curlieu, Lowesby, and Skeffington which respectively lie on the boundary of the hinterlands of Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray, and Uppingham (Rutland). Nevill Holt, just within the hinterland of Uppingham, has Market Harborough for its post town. The settlement also appeared in the list of those in Market Harborough district - see Fig. 10.

As a result of the fairly even spacing of the market towns, the hinterlands show a correspondingly close equivalence in area, except that the hinterland of Leicester is considerably bigger because to both east and west the market towns of Uppingham/Oakham and Ashby-de-la-Zouch respectively are more than 17 miles distant compared with the normal distance of 12 to 14 miles. However, the close approximation in the areas of the hinterlands is not matched by a similar equality of their populations. As Fig. 11 shows, there was by 1800 a considerable variation in the density of population in different parts of the county. (Compare this with Fig.3). Leicester, Loughborough, and Hinckley, the 'semi-industrialised'

(i) (Directory of Leicestershire. Leicester 1815. p.95)

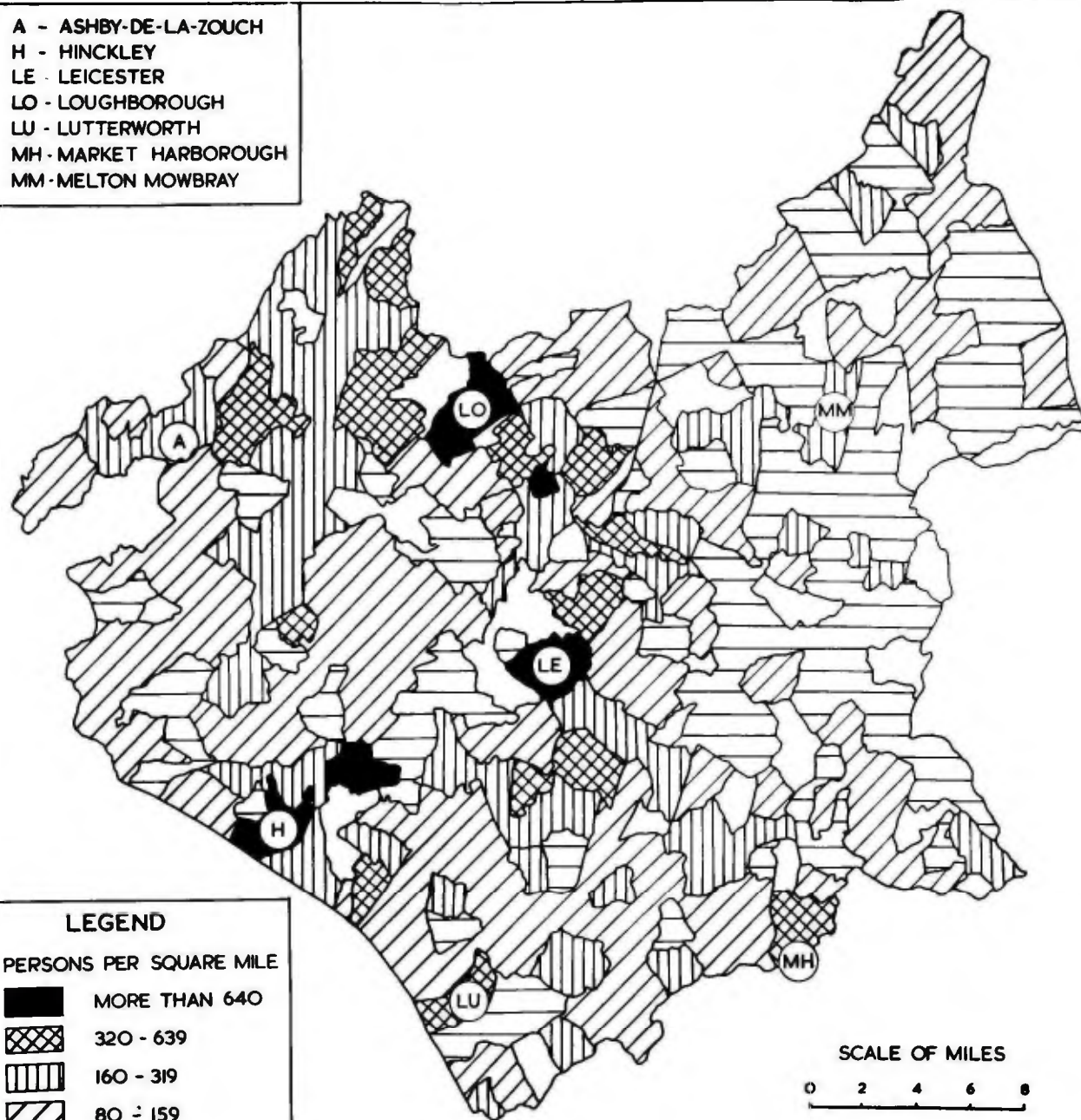
towns stand out as islands of relatively dense population and the parishes in which framework knitting had been established - viz: Syston, Thurmaston, Mountsorrel, Sileby, etc. in the Soar valley, Wigston and Blaby to the south of Leicester, and Earl Shilton and Sharnford near Hinckley - all have a population denser than 320 per square mile. On the other hand the more extensive agricultural tracts of north-east, east, south, and west Leicestershire are much less lightly populated.

Represented diagrammatically on Fig. 9 and also shown in table 5 are the populations of the several hinterlands. The populations range from just over 8,000 in the case of Lutterworth to over 20,000 in the cases of Leicester and Loughborough.

An examination of the hinterlands brings out some essential differences in the types of settlements to be found within them. The differences arise from the fact that within three of the hinterlands there are grouped some industrial or semi-industrial settlements whose populations have been considerably advanced. For example, the hinterland of Loughborough included several villages in which framework-knitting had become an important occupation. These included seven villages with a population exceeding 1,000 including the two most populous places - outside the market towns - in the county. These were Shepshed and Castle Donington with populations of 2627 and 1959 respectively. Of Shepshed, Nichols wrote:

LEICESTERSHIRE: DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION. 1801

A - ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH
H - HINCKLEY
LE - LEICESTER
LO - LOUGHBOROUGH
LU - LUTTERWORTH
MH - MARKET HARBOROUGH
MM - MELTON MOWBRAY



LEGEND

PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE

	MORE THAN 640
	320 - 639
	160 - 319
	80 - 159
	40 - 79
	LESS THAN 40

BASED ON CENSUS RETURNS 1801

SCALE OF MILES



FIG. 11.

'A very large stocking manufactory is carried on here....
and is supposed to employ 400 persons in framework
knitting only'.⁽ⁱ⁾

Loughborough's hinterland included 42 places altogether but these seven larger settlements accounted for 51% of the total population.

Of the 18,651 people in the hinterland of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, 57% lived in parishes in which the extractive industries provided some degree of employment. Coleorton, Worthington, Whitwick, Thringstone, and Ibstock in Leicestershire and Measham and Seal in Derbyshire were the scene of coal workings; and at Ticknall and Breedon-on-the-Hill limestone mining and lime-burning were locally important.

The hinterland of Hinckley included 33 places with a total population of almost 13,000. Of this total number, however, the three parishes immediately adjacent to Hinckley to north and west - viz: Barwell, Earl Shilton and Burbage - accounted for 3163, that is almost 25%. These were the villages which shared in the industrial activities of Hinckley and a large number of their inhabitants were by this date engaged in the hosiery trade.

In the hinterlands of the other towns the population was much more evenly distributed. Of 70 settlements in the hinterland of Leicester, only 2 had a population of over 1000, whilst 40 had less than 250 inhabitants. In the spheres of influence of Lutterworth, Market Harborough, and Melton Howbray,

(i) (Nichols, J. op.cit. Vol.3. p.1011)

Table 5

Table showing the Population of the Market Towns and their Spheres of Influence at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century						
Town	Population of the Town	Population of its Hinterland	Number of Settlements in the Hinterland	Total Population of the 'rural' settlements in the Hinterlands	Town's Population as a percentage of the total Population of Town and Hinterland	
Leicester	16953	20,026	70	c.11,000	46	
Loughborough	4546	20,780	42	c.10,000	18	
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	2674	18,651	40	c. 8,000	13	
Market Harborough	1716	14,965	53	c.14,000	10	
Hinckley	5070	12,974	33	c. 9,000	28	
Melton Mowbray	1766	10,574	52	10,574	14	
Lutterworth	1652	8,818	34	8,818	16	

no settlement had more than a thousand people. Each of these hinterlands was more or less entirely devoid of industrialisation and the larger settlements were a reflection of more intensive agricultural development - as, for example, the settlements in the Welland valley several of which had populations exceeding 500 - or, of the development of certain service facilities in villages some considerable distance from the market town. An example of this is seen at Long Clawson, over eight miles from its market town of Melton Mowbray, and which had a population of over 600.

Taking these factors into account and viewing the market towns solely as centres for agricultural purposes, we find that Market Harborough served the largest population followed by Leicester and Melton Mowbray (table 5). These figures give a more accurate impression of the relative importance of the towns as marketing centres for livestock and other surplus products of the land.

The relationships between the populations of the towns and those of their hinterlands might also be examined. The total population of town-plus-hinterland ranged from 37,000 in the case of Leicester down to 10,500 in the case of Lutterworth. (Table 5). It is a comparison of these figures, rather than those of the town population, or the hinterland population alone, which give the truest picture of the relative status of the towns as trading centres.

However, the proportion of the total population in the

town itself, will suggest the value of the hinterland trade to the town. As shown in Table 5 this ranges from 46% in the case of Leicester down to 10% in the case of Market Harborough. With the exception of Leicester and Hinckley only, the towns have a population less than one-fifth the size of that of their respective hinterlands indicating very clearly the extent to which the early 19th century market towns were dependent on their activities as marketing and trading centres for the places within their hinterlands. Even for the two towns with well developed industrial functions - Leicester and Hinckley - the fact that their populations were exceeded by those of their hinterlands suggests that their relations with the countryside were still of primary importance.

In an earlier chapter we have noted that the markets in the smaller towns had, by 1800, either died out or become of but minor significance.⁽ⁱ⁾ However, in some cases their annual fairs for livestock, remained of some importance and as these would attract support which would otherwise have gone to the market towns under discussion they must be borne in mind. In the hinterland of Loughborough, for example, while the annual fair at Mountsorrel was, by 1772, only used as a pleasure fair,⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ yet at Kegworth, to the north of the town, rights to a market and fair which had been granted as late as 1699 were still being utilised. By the end of the

(i) (See above p. 70.)

(ii) (Owen's Book of Fairs. op.cit.)

18th century the market was "almost disused"⁽ⁱ⁾ but the two annual fairs had grown into three and were presumably still thriving thus making the farmers in this area rather less dependent on the facilities at Loughborough.

In the hinterland of Melton Mowbray the fair at Waltham 'for horses, horned cattle, hogs and goods of all sorts',⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ was still held annually on September 19th, and would effect to some extent the autumnal sales at Melton.

In the western part of the county the two annual fairs^{at Bosworth} were still of some importance although the market was "almost in disuse".

'The first fair, held on May 8th, for horned cattle, horses, and merchandise, is much noted for fine bulls, and heifers in calf; the other is held on July 10th for horned cattle, horses, and sheep, and is likewise a great pleasure fair.'⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

These fairs must have effected to some extent those held at Ashby, Hinckley, and Atherstone.

The fact, however, that in 1772 only 11 fairs were held outside the market towns compared with 39 within them^(iv) indicates the small importance of seasonal marketing in places other than the market towns. Moreover, as has been shown earlier in the chapter, many new fairs were started in the

(i) {Nichols, J. op.cit. Vol.3. p.815}
(ii) {ibid. Vol.2. p.395}
(iii) {ibid. Vol.4. p.493}
(iv) {Owen's Book of Fairs. op.cit.)

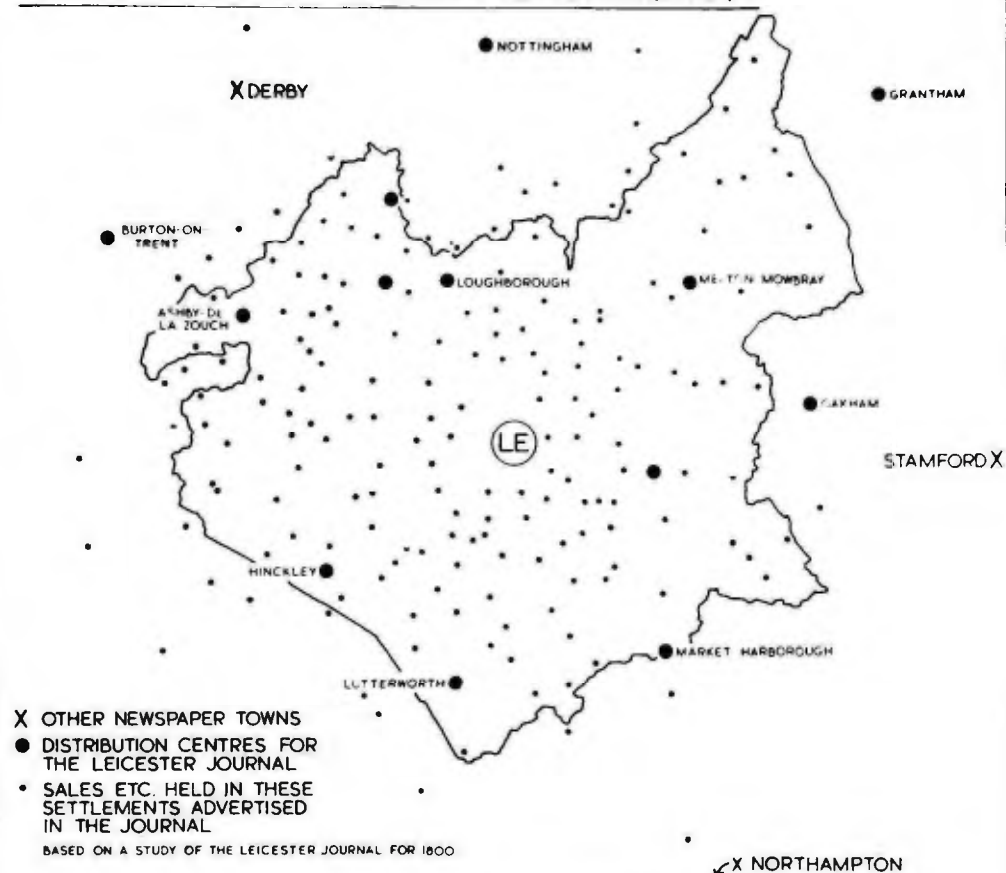
market towns at the end of the 18th century. By 1800 the 39 fairs had expanded to 50.

In conclusion, the position of Leicester as a service centre in 1800 must be clarified. In a previous chapter,⁽ⁱ⁾ and earlier in this chapter,⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ the greater importance of Leicester as a central settlement has been examined. By 1800 its enhanced importance was reflected in the greater diversity of marketing and trading facilities which it offered, and it has been suggested that this probably caused the boundary of its sphere of influence to migrate rather more than half the distance towards the smaller towns. However, the city at this date did offer services not provided by any other settlement in the county. One of these was a local weekly newspaper. An analysis of its use for advertising suggests that the influence of Leicester was felt in all parts of the county (see 1st. diagram on Fig.12). Additional evidence of Leicester's wider hinterland is seen in the second diagram on Fig.12 for this shows that market day carriers' carts moved to Leicester from most parts of the county with the exception of the north-west and the north-east. All the smaller market towns except Ashby-de-la-Zouch had direct transport facilities to Leicester, not only by these carts, but also by the stage coaches operating by 1800. The wider sphere of influence of Leicester will, however, be dealt with in more detail in later sections of this thesis.

(i) { See above p. 82 }
(ii) { See above p. 100 }

HINTERLANDS OF LEICESTER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY

AREA SERVED BY THE LEICESTER JOURNAL



MARKET DAY CARRIERS' CARTS FROM LEICESTER

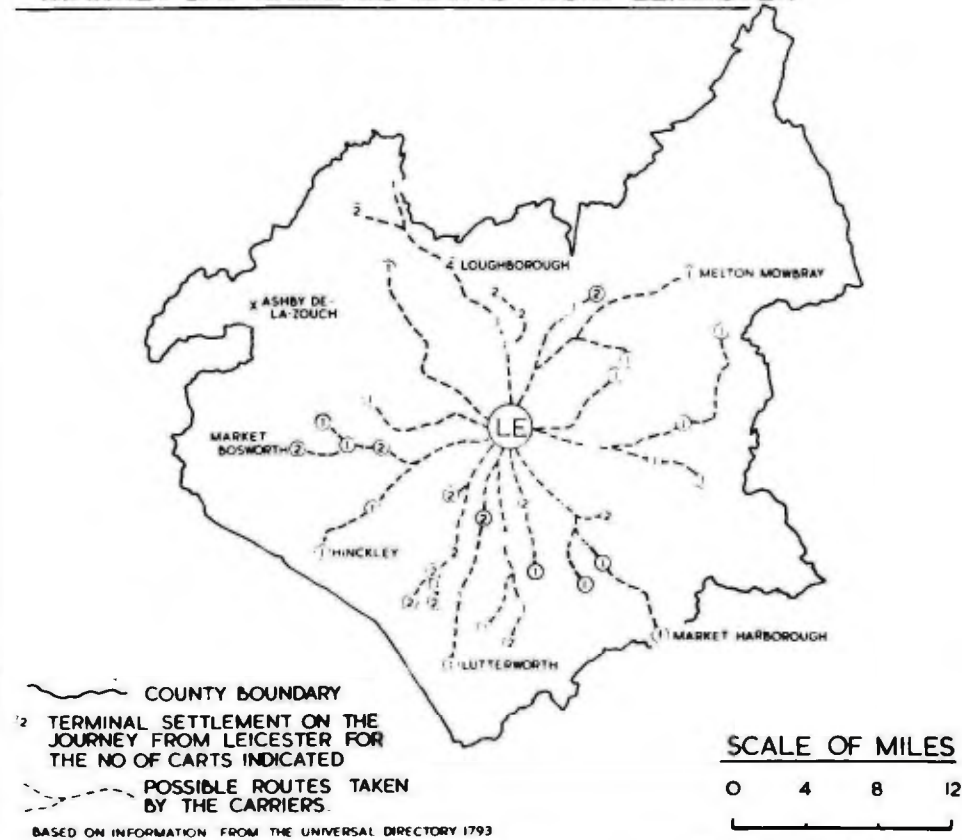


Fig. 12.

SECTION TWO.

THE URBAN HIERARCHY AND URBAN SPHERES OF
INFLUENCE IN LEICESTERSHIRE IN THE MID-
19TH CENTURY.

CHAPTER ONE.THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY BACKGROUND
TO URBAN-RURAL RELATIONSHIPS.

The traditional relationship between town and country, described in the previous section, remained of dominating importance in the mid-nineteenth century. The market towns of 1800 remained, as we shall later see, the main foci of economic and social activities, the chief of which continued to be the weekly stock and produce market.

However, several significant changes, with a resultant effect on the relations between town and country, had developed by the middle of the century and these must be carefully considered. With the increasing complexity in the life of the country the need for more effective government and administration became of paramount importance. Nationally this was reflected in the embryonic democratic form of government which stemmed from the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832, and on a local level it was marked by the development of more effective units of administration commencing with the system of Poor Law Unions in 1834. The development of these local units of government gave a new function to the towns which were selected, on an 'ad hoc' basis, as the centres of administration. Hence a new form of contact with a dependent area became of importance. By 1800 the initial development of industry had affected certain of the market towns and adjacent villages but the analysis of that period revealed that this new function of the towns remained

subsidiary to their functions as service centres. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, the situation had become far more complicated. Industrialisation had spread to far wider areas of the county and had become far more intense in certain specific towns. In 1831 the census returns revealed the following statistics of employment of men over the age of 20.

<u>Occupation.</u>	<u>Number Employed.</u>	<u>% of County Total.</u>
Agriculture.	15,343	30.6.
Manufacturing.	12,240	24.6
Labourers.	3,701	7.4

Thus those employed in manufacturing plus those employed as labourers outnumbered the workers in agriculture in the county as a whole. This situation had two specific manifestations in as far as town-country relations were concerned. Firstly, the functions of some of the market towns as service centres became but secondary activities, industry assuming the pride of place. For example, in Leicester, industry employed 4400 men, whilst in the retail trades and handicrafts only 4100 were employed and many of these, of course, were occupied in giving services to the population of the city rather than to the population of a dependent hinterland. In Hinckley, there were more than 800 men in industry and less than 400 in retail trades and handicrafts. In Loughborough too, industry had become the leading employer of labour.

Secondly, industrialisation had continued to spread to the villages, greatly inflating their size. In these

industrialised villages there was a much lower degree of self-sufficiency than there had been in the agricultural communities and hence additional retailing and servicing establishments were necessary. Such establishments thus tended to become a part of village life, and hence there would be a less degree of dependence on the market town for such facilities.

Social contacts between town and country were stimulated at this period by the development of local newspapers made possible by the removal of the duty on newspaper advertisements in 1853 and by the abolition of the stamp duty in 1859. Social contact had previously been limited to personal contact made between a townsman and a member of the farming community on the latter's visit to the town on market days. This was now supplemented by the development of this new local means of communication. Its influence would tend to strengthen the ties between town and country.

Such were the significant changes which assumed importance at about the middle of the last century. They will be examined in more detail in later chapters of this section. Apart from the social contacts brought about by the development of the newspapers, however, the effectiveness of the relations between town and country in the mid-nineteenth century depended on the means of transport which were available. The means of transport remained relatively inefficient. The railway network in Leicestershire was by 1851 but immaturely developed and only a handful of settlements had the benefit of this rapid

means of communication. The essential link between town and country was provided by the slow moving, cumbersome and infrequent carriers' cart. These existed mainly for the transfer of goods between town and country - agricultural products in one direction and supplies of consumer goods in the other - but they were also utilised as passenger vehicles when it was not possible to walk to the town. Detailed consideration will be given to the provision of transport facilities in the mid-nineteenth century for from the county directories information concerning the carriers' carts is available.

In the assessment of town country relations in earlier periods the shortage of reliable information has made the attempts rather tentative. By 1851, however, this is no longer such a formidable obstacle. As indicated above, information concerning the transport system of the period is available. Of the hierarchy of service centres the census returns of 1831 and 1851 make detailed examinations of the provision of servicing facilities in each settlement possible. Various other official documents supplement this information and also give the details of the development of the administrative services. The local directories allow an assessment of the relative importance of the centralised settlements based on the contemporary descriptions that are there available. This can also be supplemented by an examination of the columns of the local newspapers which in addition to providing information

about the towns themselves also offered an indication as to the extent of their tributary areas.

Hence from a variety of sources a comprehensive picture of the social geography of the county a century ago can be built up and examined.

CHAPTER TWO.
MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY SERVICE CENTRES IN
LEICESTERSHIRE.

In the introduction to this thesis the concept of the 'Urban Hierarchy' was considered.⁽¹⁾ Most of the attempts at a classification of the service functions of towns were concerned with the contemporary situation. Only Dickinson suggested a division of settlements into functional groups based on an examination of the situation in an earlier century.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

In this chapter, however, an attempt at a detailed analysis of the service functions of the settlements in Leicestershire in the mid-nineteenth century will be made. Firstly, an introductory approach to the problem will be made by a study of the Census Returns of 1831. Included in these returns was an analysis of the occupations of all male persons over the age of 20. The enumerators had to specify the employment of males in six groups including those employed in agriculture, those in manufacturing, those as labourers, those as servants, and separately the two following groups:

1. 'Males in retail trade and handicrafts as masters, shopmen, journeymen, apprentices, or in any capacity requiring skill in business',⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

Included in the returns were detailed specifications for Leicester, ~~and~~ Loughborough and for the County as a whole which

(i) (See above p. 11 et. seq.)

(ii) (Dickinson R.E. The Distribution and Functions of the smaller Urban Settlements of East Anglia. Geog. Vol. 17. 1932. p. 19)

(iii) (Census Returns for 1831. Details of the Specification of males over 20. Group 3)

show that this group included all shopkeepers, traders, and craftsmen such as tailors, boot and shoe makers, smiths, turners, tinmen, and the like and thus for each settlement the number employed in this group will give an indication of its trading functions.

2. 'Males as wholesale merchants, bankers, capitalists, professional persons, artists, architects, teachers, clerks, surveyors, and other educated men.' (i)

An examination of the numbers employed in this group, therefore, will give a picture of the professional services offered by each settlement.

This evidence, therefore, must be used to establish the service centres in 1831. Bearing in mind that the essential feature of the structure of the urban hierarchy is the relative concentration of service function in certain settlements then in order to ascertain which are the service centres we must determine those settlements in which there are located more than the average number of those people who provide the services, viz: the traders and the craftsmen and the professional people.

In Leicestershire as a whole in 1831, there were 27.7% of males employed in retail trades and handicrafts and 2.9% in the professions. Therefore, in theory, where a settlement has a greater percentage employed in these two groups it may be regarded as a service centre. In Fig. 13 is shown the

(i) (ibid. Group 4)

distribution of these settlements in the county. Out of a total of about 330 settlements only 49 have more than the proportionate number of inhabitants engaged in retail trades and handicrafts. (As the numbers employed in the professions in most settlements are so small it was not practicable to analyse these figures). These 49 settlements have a total population of 95,461 inhabitants equalling 48.9% of the county total; they have 9,268 men employed in the retail trades, this being 67.2% of the county total. The difference between the two percentages is a measure of the concentration of the service facilities in these settlements.

Looking briefly at the picture of distribution the most significant feature is the dominating position held in the hierarchy by those settlements which were designated as the market towns in 1800 (See Fig. 18). In 1831 these seven towns - viz: Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray - have a combined population of rather more than 68,000 which is equivalent to 34.7% of the total for the county. On the other hand they have 50.8% of the men employed in retail trade and 53.4% of those in the professional services. Put rather more simply, the market towns with one-third of the county population have over one-half of the people in the service industries. There are, of course, big differences in the employment structure of the market towns with Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Hinckley at either extreme but this will be considered later

LEICESTERSHIRE: SERVICE CENTRES. 1831

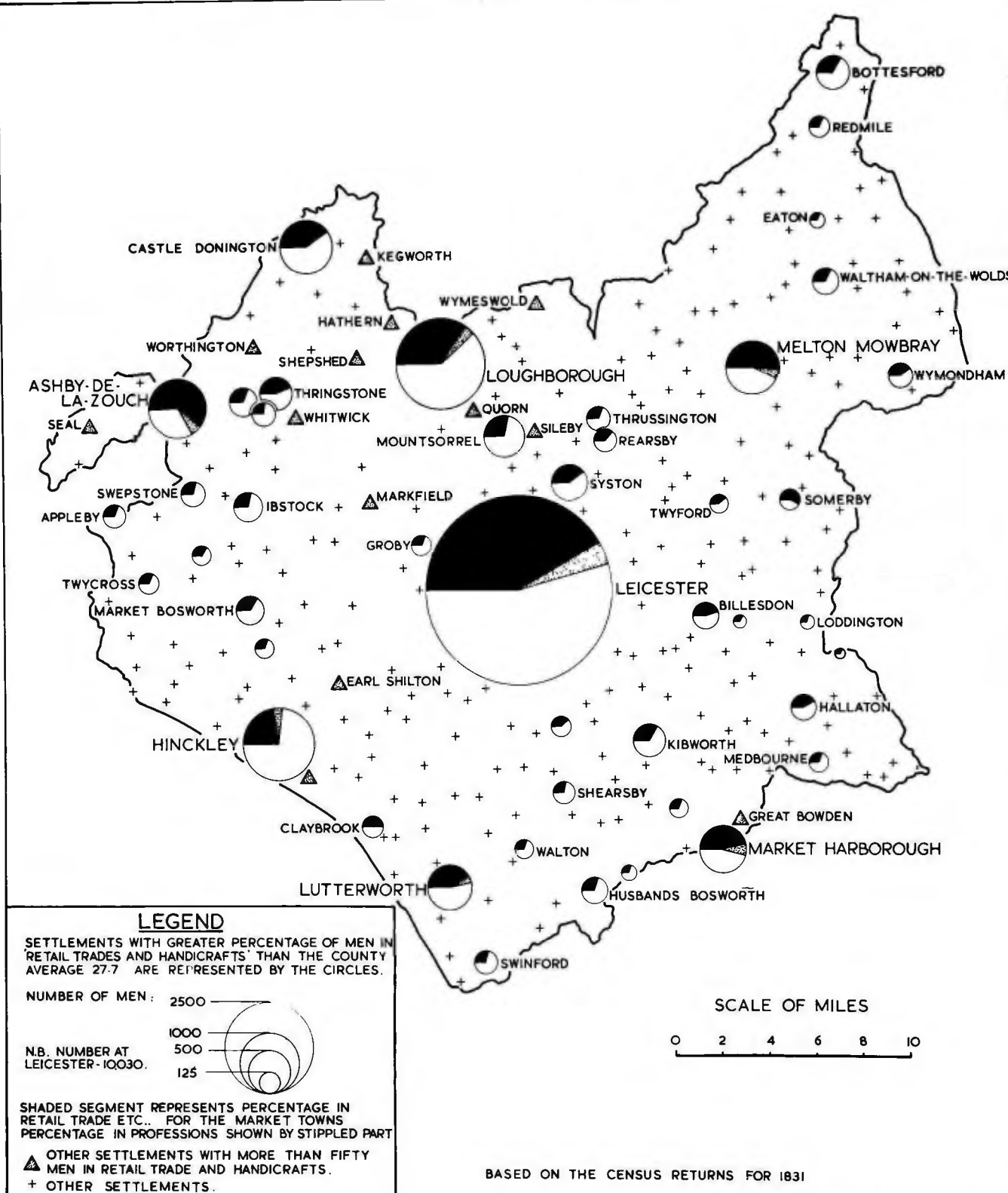


FIG. 13.

in this section when the function of each of the towns as a central settlement is discussed.

However, the analysis does also show that in addition to the market towns there were other settlements in which service provision was an important function. South and east of a line joining Claybrook, Leicester, Syston and Loughborough industrial development had been of little or no significance and in this area there would appear to be a recognisable pattern of subsidiary service centres at approximately four mile intervals. Examples of these subsidiary centres are seen at Wymondham with 38.5% of its 169 males engaged in the retail trades and handicrafts and 3.0% in the professions; or at Somerby with 54 of its 97 males in retail service.

The towns which were designated as small market towns in 1800⁽ⁱ⁾ stand out clearly as subsidiary centres. Waltham, Billesdon, and Hallaton in the eastern part of the county have 31%, 44% and 43% in the retail trades respectively and in the west, Market Bosworth is similarly placed. This place actually had 6.4% of its males in the professions; a figure more than double the county average.

North and west of Leicester the complexity of the picture as a result of the development of industrialisation is clearly brought out. In the Soar valley, of the three large industrial villages of Sileby, Quorn and Mountsorrel, in all of which there

(i) (see above p. 70.)

are more than 50 men employed on the retail trades, it is only in the latter place that the county average is exceeded - a reflection of the settlement's former activity as a small marketing town.

Castle Donington, in the north-west corner of the county stands out very prominently. With a population of more than 3,000 it was larger than the market towns of Lutterworth and Market Harborough and has about 40% of its males in the retail trades and handicrafts. This would suggest that it is a service centre of some importance especially when its distance from the market towns of Loughborough, Ashby and Derby is taken into consideration. Without doubt, it was of local importance as a trading settlement but not so important as a first analysis of the information might lead one to suppose, for of the 40% in retail trades and handicrafts quite a large number (not ascertainable from the census returns) must have been employed in a hand-industry - viz: basket making - which was not related to its function as a central settlement but to the local supply of rushes available in the Trent and Soar valleys.

Finally a contrast in the service provision in two industrial areas should be pointed out. East of Ashby-de-la-Zouch there are three settlements with more than the county average in retail and trading services and a fourth in which there are more than 50 workers in these occupations. These were the principal parishes in which coal mining was carried on in 1831 and some of those employed in these groups may have

been connected with the coal industry rather than with centralised servicing. Perhaps, for example, as carriers, for in 1831 the coal was despatched from the mines by horse and cart, no modern means of communication being available. However the dispersal of service provision through the four parishes was a significant feature. Later in the century the concentration of service facility in a new settlement, which developed after the mid 1840's, will be observed.

In contrast between Hinckley and Leicester the absence of service centres is noted. The fact that none of the settlements appear with more than the county average of retailers and tradesmen is probably accounted for by the recent rapid expansion of these settlements as a result of industrialisation in the early part of the 19th century. In some settlements the population had doubled between 1801 and 1831 and by the latter date most of the men were employed in industry so that the percentage in the retail trades and handicrafts was quite small. For instance Enderby's population rose from 513 to 1,141; of the 273 adult males in 1831 over 40% were employed in 'manufactures' and only 17% in 'retail trades and handicrafts'. At Narborough the population increased from 541 to 792 in the same period and at the later date more than 60% were engaged in manufacture and only 4% in retail trade and handicrafts. Similar situations prevailed at Barwell, Blaby, Sapcote, Countesthorpe, and several other places.

The value of this analysis must not, however, be over-estimated. Although it clearly brings out the importance of the market towns in the urban hierarchy yet the evidence is inconclusive on two counts, especially as far as the determination of sub-centres is concerned.

Firstly, as in the case of Castle Donington, the figures of those engaged in retail trades and handicrafts may include numbers of persons working in handicraft industries not oriented to a service area.

Secondly, as the population was not entirely nucleated in 1831 (see Fig. 26) the numbers of agricultural workers included in the figures for a settlement will depend to some extent on the size of the parish. Thus, in a large parish the number of agricultural workers might hide the significance of the service functions provided in the village itself.

It is, therefore, necessary to apply other available evidence to the problem in order to secure a more accurate analysis of the situation.

The enumerator's returns for each settlement for the Census of 1851⁽ⁱ⁾ give details of the occupation of every individual and from these it has been possible to extract comprehensive details of the numbers engaged in the retail trades, in the professions, and as craftsmen for each of the market towns (except Leicester), and for all the other settlements

(i) Available for inspection in the Public Record Office.

in the county, the numbers employed in a selected list of retail trades and professional services etc. In a later chapter the comprehensive information concerning the market towns will be utilised in a comparative examination of their servicing facilities.

An analysis of the distribution of 21 services, including 15 retailers and craftsmen, 5 professional services, and the provision of banking facilities, throughout the settlements of the county has been the basis of an INDEX OF SERVICE PROVISION determined for each and every settlement. The index is an attempt to represent statistically the varying degree of service provision available at each place, for such an analysis is basic to any discussion of service centres and the urban hierarchy. The method of assessing the index has been set out in Appendix 1.

The 21 services represent a range of facilities which would have been required at varying intervals by different sections of the community in the middle of the nineteenth century. Thus some of the services included - viz: grocer, boot and shoe repairer, tailor - would have been required at frequent intervals by all sections of the population: Others - viz: banks, chemists, auctioneers - were required at frequent intervals only by certain sections of the community: Whilst other facilities - viz: wine merchants, furnishers, dentists - were utilised only by restricted sections of the population at less frequent intervals. Thus, in a service centre of any importance the number and range of facilities available would necessarily be a

more or less comprehensive one, whilst the possession of a few of the services by numerous other places would indicate their lower status in the urban hierarchy.

In Fig. 14 are indicated those settlements with an index of service provision above 5.0 and with a range of at least a quarter (i.e. six) of the 21 services whose distribution has been analysed. Details of the facilities available in these settlements are given in the sections 3, 4, and 5 of Table 6. In Table 6A are set out the details of additional settlements which whilst having an index of service provision greater than 5.0 yet have a range of less than 6 services.

These, however, are the settlements with some considerable service provision and before examining them in detail the position amongst the remaining settlements of the county will be examined.

111 of the 330 settlements in the county had an Index of Service Provision of nil meaning that they were without any one of the 21 services. The distribution of these is shown in Fig. 27. The remaining two-thirds of the settlements had some aspect of service provision available. Of the 219, however, by far the greatest majority had but severely restricted facilities available. 68 of them had an index of S.P. (service provision) of only 1.0 implying possession of a maximum of two of the 21 services. 136 settlements had an index of S.P. of only 2.5 implying a maximum of four services. 60 settlements had one facility only; in 19 cases this was a grocer; in 25 cases a tailor; and in 13 cases a boot and shoe repairer (a total of 57

LEICESTERSHIRE: SERVICE CENTRES 1851

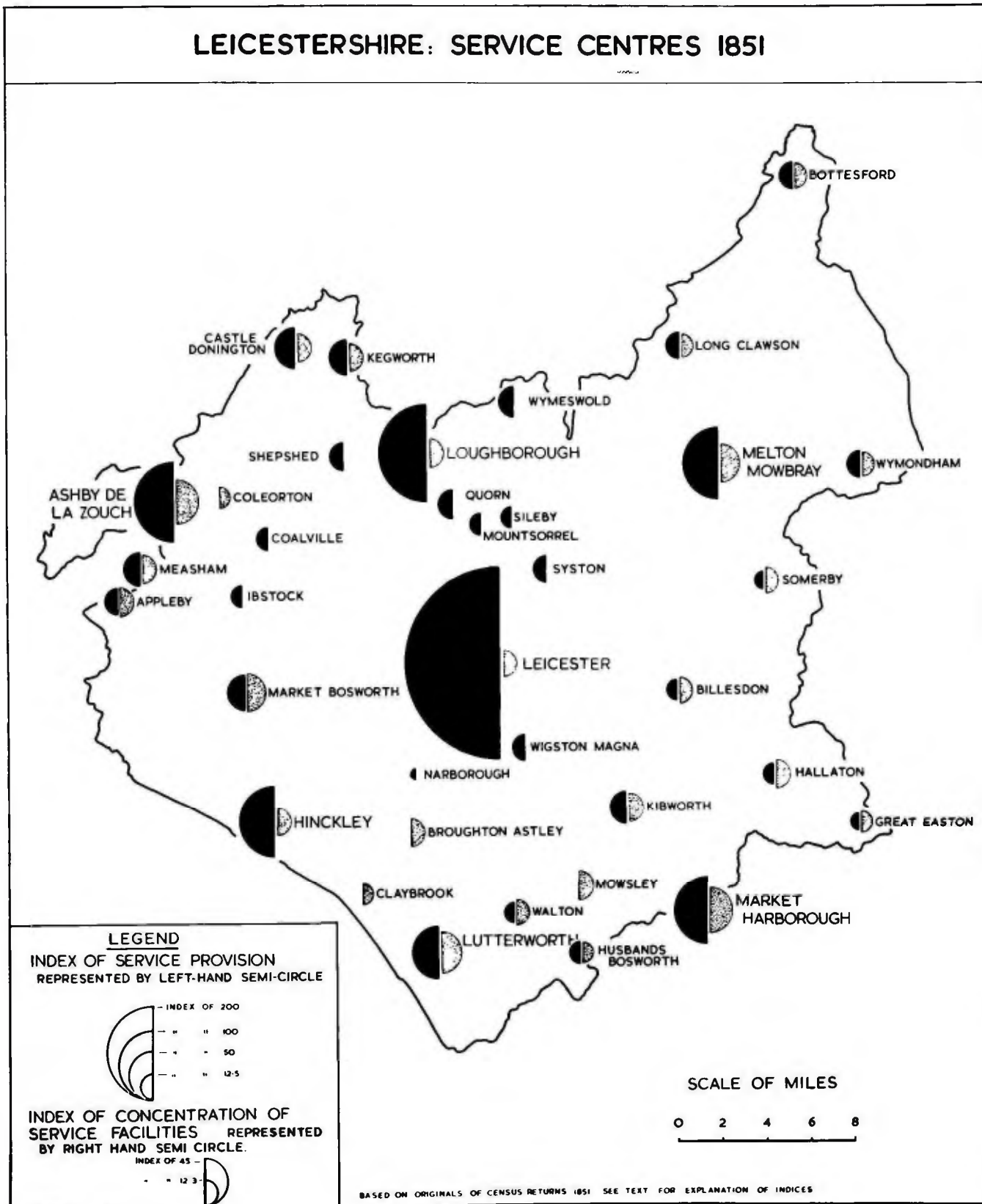


FIG. 14.

in these three cases). 124 settlements had no services apart from a grocer, tailor, and/or boot repairer. This means that there were less than 100 settlements in the county as a whole with a wider range of service facility than these three offered. There were only 49 settlements with a representative of the professions.

These figures will suffice to give an impression of the paucity of services available in the large majority of settlements in the county a century ago. Returning, therefore, to those settlements with a greater range of service provision the number shown on Fig. 14 is only 32 and additionally there were 15 settlements as detailed in table 6A. (Their distribution is shown on Fig. 27).

These latter 15 settlements, however, possessed but a limited range of services. Each of them had five services or less and as shown in Table 7 four services were most commonly available - viz: draper, grocer, boot and shoe repairer, and tailor - and a fifth, that of a doctor, was the only other one available in more than three settlements. These five services actually accounted for 56 out of the total of 67 available in this group of settlements.

Of the 32 places shown in Fig. 14 only two - Leicester and Loughborough - provided everyone of the 21 services; five others provided 16 to 18; three more than 10 services; and the remaining 22 from 6 to 9 of the services. (see table 6). One salient fact emerges from this analysis; that it is only the

Table 6
Table showing the 'Index of Service Provision' for Leicestershire Settlements with more than one-quarter of 21 selected services. 1851.

Services	Number of quarters of 21 selected services. 1851.																					Total Points = Index of Service Provision	No. of Services (21)		
	Confectioner	Chemist	Earthenware Dealer	Clothier	Draper	Grocer	Haberdasher	Hairdresser	Hatter	Ironmonger	Wine & Spirit Merchant	Milliner	Boot & Shoe Repairer	Furnisher	Tailor	Solicitor	Accountant	Auctioneer	Doctor	Dentist	Bank			Bank (part time)	
No. of pts. for ea. service	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	1	1 1/3	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	1 1/3	1 1/2	2	2	1	2	5	2 1/2			
1. COUNTY TOTAL (Excluding Leicester)																									
	58	67	28	28	18	16	70	75	24	42	54	45	18	4	16	52	18	48	99	2	50	15		1471	-
2. LEICESTER																									
	36	51	40	32	29	30	66	90	-	22	32	21	118	8	26	36	22	24	36	8	25	2 1/2		756	21
3. THE MARKET TOWNS																									
Loughborough	15	9	10	4	15	16 1/3	22 1/2	12	2	8	12	6	27	2	17	7 1/2	2	8	6	2	10	5		218	21
M. Mowbray	7 1/2	9	-	-	10	5	7 1/2	4 1/2	6	8	6	6	10	-	10 1/3	4 1/2	2	6	6	-	10	5		123	17
Ashby-d-l-Z.	9	6	2	2	6	5 1/3	6	7 1/2	6	6	12	3	8	-	11	10 1/2	-	10	6	-	5	-		122	18
Hinckley	4 1/2	4 1/2	-	2	6	7 1/3	9	4 1/2	6	2	6	7 1/2	15	2	4	4 1/2	-	4	5	-	5	2 1/2		103	18
Mk. Harborough	4 1/2	4 1/2	-	-	17	4	7 1/2	6	2	4	6	6	8	-	2	4 1/2	-	4	4	-	10	2 1/2		101	16
Lutterworth	-	3	4	-	8	4 2/3	4 1/2	6	-	6	4	4 1/2	7 1/2	-	5	7 1/2	2	2	6	-	5	-		80	16
Total for Market Towns																								747	
4. SETTLEMENTS WITH OVER 7 (1/3) SERVICES																									
C. Donington	3	3	-	4	3	3 2/3	-	6	-	-	2	3	6	-	3 1/3	1 1/2	2	-	3	-	-	-		43	13
M. Bosworth	1 1/2	1 1/2	-	-	4	1 1/3	-	4 1/2	-	2	-	1 1/2	2	-	1 2/3	-	-	-	3	-	5	-		28	11
Kegworth	-	3	4	-	3	3	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	1 1/3	3	-	2	1 1/2	-	-	2	-	-	-		24	10
Measham	3	-	4	4	3	2 1/3	-	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	3 1/2	-	1/3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-		24	9
Kibworth	3	-	-	-	6	1/3	1 1/2	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	1	-	1 2/3	-	-	-	4	-	-	-		19	8
Wigston Magna	3	-	-	-	-	2/3	1 1/2	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	1	-	1 1/3	-	-	2	2	-	-	-		13	8
TOTAL for Section 4																								151	
5. SETTLEMENTS WITH MORE THAN 5 (1/2) SERVICES																									
Appleby Magna	-	1 1/2	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	4	-	2	-	-	-		17.5	7
Quorndon	-	3	-	-	2	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5 1/2	-	1	3	-	1	-	-	-	-		17.2	7
Bottesford	-	-	-	-	2	2 1/3	-	1 1/2	-	2	-	-	4	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-		15.6	7
Syston	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	1 1/2	-	2	-	-	-	3	-	-	-		13.34	7
H. Bosworth	-	-	-	-	3	1 1/3	-	1 1/2	-	-	-	1 1/2	1 1/2	-	1 1/3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-		11.2	7
Billesdon	-	-	-	-	1	1	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2/3	-	-	2	2	-	-	-		10.2	7
Long Quoson	-	1 1/2	-	-	1	2/3	-	-	-	-	2	-	1 1/2	-	1 1/3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		9.0	7
Shepshed	-	-	-	-	3	3 1/3	-	-	2	-	-	-	3 1/2	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		15.9	6
Wymeswold	-	-	-	1	3	2 1/3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		11.3	6
Hallaton	-	-	-	-	2	2/3	-	3	-	-	-	-	3 1/2	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		11.2	6
Mountsorrel	-	-	-	-	1	2	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	-	1 1/2	-	1 1/3	-	-	2	-	-	-	-		9.3	6
Coalville	-	1 1/2	-	-	1	1	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2/3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-		8.7	6
Sileby	-	1 1/2	-	-	2	1 1/3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 1/2	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-		8.3	6
Wymondham	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 1/2	2 1/2	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-		8.2	6
Ibstock	-	1 1/2	-	-	1	2	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	-	1 1/2	-	1 1/3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		8.2	6
Walton	-	-	-	-	1	1 2/3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-		7.7	6
Great Easton	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	1	-	2/3	-	-	2	2	-	-	-		6.5	6
Somerby	-	1 1/2	-	-	1	1/3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1 1/3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		6.5	6
Narborough	-	-	-	-	1	2/3	-	1 1/2	-	-	-	-	1 1/2	-	2/3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		5.3	6
TOTAL for Section 5																									
199.0																									

Table 6A

[illegible]

seven market towns which provided a comprehensive or almost comprehensive service. Only two other settlements, Castle Donington and Market Bosworth, provided more than half of the 21 facilities. Even the market towns lacked some of the more specialised facilities. For example, in table 7 it is shown that there was a furnisher in only three of the seven towns and a dentist in only two of them. A specialist earthenware dealer, a clothier, and an accountant were available in four of the settlements. However, the first two of these three services might well have been provided as part of another business - for example, the sale of earthenware as part of an ironmongers business.

Looking again at Fig. 14, the wide variation in the Index of S.P. for the market towns is very apparent. This, of course, was due to the multiplication of each service and is a reflection of an increased population either in the town itself or in its hinterland. Leicester was outstanding with an index of 756 while that for Loughborough was less than one ^{third} ~~quarter~~ of this figure standing at 218. The Indices of the remaining market towns did not, however, vary so significantly ranging only from 80 in the case of Lutterworth to 123 for Melton Mowbray.

Six of the remaining 25 places have more than one third of the services (Section 4 of Table 6). These have four services in common - viz: grocer, tailor, boot and shoe repairer, and doctor - whilst their additional services vary very greatly the most common being confectioner, draper and hairdresser found in

five out of the six. (see table 7). Three services are not found in any of the settlements and five more in only one of them. These include an auctioneer and a bank. The absence of an auctioneer immediately indicates that these service centres had little significance as livestock marketing centres although, it must be remembered that at this period many beasts were sold by private deal and thus the absence of an auctioneer is not necessarily synonymous with the absence of a cattle market. Again, the fact that a bank was only found in one of these settlements - Market Bosworth - is an indication of their unimportance in the commercial field and again suggests that they were little used by farmers who, in the community of 1851, would be most likely to need the services of a bank by virtue of their seasonal transactions. However, these settlements did provide a range of the more common shopping needs, together with some of the specialised services, and for these purposes could be used as an alternative to the market towns whereby a longer journey was avoided.

There were 19 settlements with six or seven services. (see section 5 of table 6). The division between this group and the previous one is not so marked as the division between the market towns and the second group but whereas there are only two settlements with eight services there are seven with seven. Within this group the pattern of service provision is a fairly standard one with four of the services common to all 19 settlements and a fifth one only absent from two of them. These

Table 7

Table showing number of individual services available within each group of settlements (See Tables 6 and 6A)				
Services	Groups of Settlements Indicating no. of settlements in each group in which each service is found			
	Market Towns + Leicester 7 Settlements	Settlements with more than 1/3 of the services 6 Settlements	Settlements with more than 1/4 of the services 19 Settlements	Other Settlements with Index of Social Provision greater than 5 15 Settlements
Confectioner	6	5	1	-
Chemist	7	3	7	3
Earthenware Dealer	4	2	-	-
Clothier	4	2	2	-
Draper	7	5	19	10
Grocer	7	6	19	14
Haberdasher	7	3	4	1
Hairdresser	7	5	6	2
Hatter	6	-	1	-
Ironmonger	7	1	1	1
Wine Merchant	7	1	1	1
Milliner	7	3	2	1
Boot & Shoe Repairer	7	6	19	11
Furnisher	3	-	-	-
Tailor	7	6	19	13
Solicitor	7	2	1	1
Accountant	4	1	2	-
Auctioneer	7	1	2	1
Doctor	7	6	17	8
Dentist	2	-	-	-
Bank	7	1	-	-
TOTAL	127	58	122	67
Average number of services per settlement (max. 21)	18.2	9.8	6.4	4.5

five services (Table 7) accounted for 93 out of a total of 122 in the whole group. The remainder of the services in each settlement are usually one or two of the more specialised retail establishments. For example, 7 of the settlements had a chemist; 6 of them a hairdresser. Clearly these were places providing the retailing services which were required most frequently and therefore, as in the case of the previous group, were used as alternatives to the market towns for the more regular needs.

The index of service provision has been a yardstick by means of which it has been possible to measure the range and depth of service facilities available in the settlements of the county. However an index of service provision does not necessarily indicate that a given settlement has a function as a centre for service facilities. A high index of service provision can, of course, be related to the fact that the settlement provides certain services for a population other than its own, but on the other hand it can also be related to the need for services by its own population, which may have been inflated by the spread of industrialisation. In order to differentiate the functions which the service provision fulfilled it is necessary to undertake a further analysis.

The INDEX OF CONCENTRATION OF SERVICE FACILITIES provides a means by which the functions of a settlement, in providing services to a population other than its own, might be distinguished. It is based on a comparison of the service

facilities available in the county as a whole per 1,000 of the population with those available per 1,000 of the population in any settlement. The index for the county as a whole is 9.5. Where a place has an index in excess of this, then it may be considered as providing service facilities to other settlements. The method by which the index was ascertained is detailed in Appendix 2.

On Fig. 14 those settlements with an index exceeding the county index of 9.5 are shown by the stippled semi-circle. It will be noticed that settlements with an index of S.P. did not always coincide with those with an index of concentration of service facility.

In those settlements with an index of service provision only the service facilities existed to serve the locally resident population only. Without exception these may be distinguished as industrial towns and villages. For example, there are the settlements of Coalville and Ibstock on the rapidly expanding Leicestershire coalfield; the industrial villages of Mountsorrel, Sileby, and Syston in the Soar valley; and Wigston and Narborough, settlements to the south of Leicester in which the hosiery industry was of importance. In these and other settlements the service facilities available were insufficient to meet the needs of their own expanding populations and were not related to servicing the population of a hinterland.

With those settlements with an index of concentration of

service facility only it should be borne in mind that these were settlements with less than six services and thus the fact that they had rather more service facilities than their local population demanded is not of particular significance. In the case of Broughton Astley the high index of concentration of service facilities was due to the fact that there were six boot and shoe repairers in the village. In the case of Claybrook Magna the high index is a result of an auctioneer being resident in the village perhaps deliberately living midway between the two market towns of Hinckley and Lutterworth in which one might expect his places of business to have been. At Coleorton a falling population in the parish resulting from the migration of coal mining to the south-east would appear to account for the surplus service provision available. From 1831 to 1851 the population fell by 300 from 848 to 549 but the contraction in service provision would not occur so quickly.

Remaining, however, there were 22 settlements in the county showing both indices. Earlier in the chapter we noted the dominance of the market towns as far as service provision was concerned. Their dominance is again revealed in this new analysis. The details are set out in Table 8. Market Harborough headed the list with an index of concentration of service facilities of 43.4 indicating that the service provision available in the town was theoretically sufficient to provide for a population some four and a half times as great as the 2325 in the town itself. Ashby-de-la -Zouch's index of 32.7 meant

that provision was available for a population 3 times that in the town. Lutterworth has an identical index and that for Melton Mowbray followed closely behind. These four settlements were outstanding, for in the case of the other three market towns the existence of a locally resident industrial population meant that a greater percentage of the service provision was utilised by the inhabitants of the towns themselves and a proportionately smaller percentage by the inhabitants of the hinterland. Nevertheless, Loughborough had an index of 20.2 and thus provision was made for a population twice that of the town. Leicester, which had mushroomed in growth from 38,000 in 1831 to over 60,000 in 1851 as a result of its railway connections, and whose service facilities would not have increased at the same rate, still showed an index of concentration of service facilities suggesting that the service provision could meet the needs of an out-of-town population of some 15,000 in addition to its own 60,000 inhabitants.

It should be borne in mind that whereas Market Harborough's index was almost four times as great as that for Leicester yet its service provision was theoretically available to serve some 7,000 people outside the town, while from Leicester a population of almost 15,000 was theoretically served. And in the case of Loughborough an out-of-town population of 13,000 could be served compared with 6,000 in the case of Lutterworth despite the latter's index of concentration of service facility being 50% greater. To Market Harborough and Lutterworth,

Table 8

Table showing the Index of Concentration of Service Facilities for Settlements with an Index greater than the average for the County. 1851					
Settlements	Index of Service Provision	Population of the Settlement	Index of Concentration of Service Facilities	Add. pop. which could be served by surplus Service Facilities	No. of Administrative Facilities
1. Market Towns					
Market Harborough	101	2,325	43.4	7,109	8
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	122	3,762	32.7	9,184	8
Lutterworth	80	2,446	32.7	5,973	8
Melton Mowbray	123	4,391	28.4	8,735	8
Loughborough	218	10,900	20.0	13,195	8
Hinckley	103	6,111	16.8	4,696	7 +
Leicester	756	60,584	11.5	14,540	8
2. Other Settlements with Index above the County Average (9.5)					
Market Bosworth	28.0	1,058	26.4	1,882	4 +
Broughton Astley	5.2	323	16.4	229	-
Hallaton	11.2	691	16.2	487	2
Kibworth	19.0	1,199	15.9	808	1
Mawsley	4.0	263	15.3	158	-
Measham	23.2	1,607	14.7	879	-
Appleby	17.5	1,181	14.7	656	-
Castle Donington	43.2	3,028	14.2	1,510	3
Kegworth	24.5	1,782	13.8	807	1
Billesdon	10.2	1,763	13.4	313	3
Somerby	6.5	503	12.9	180	1
Walton	7.7	647	12.0	170	-
Bottesford	15.6	1,374	11.4	275	2
Husbands Bosworth	11.2	1,002	11.2	189	-
Claybrook Magna	5.5	512	10.8	84	-
Colerton	5.9	549	10.7	68	-
Long Clawson	9.2	869	10.4	82	2
Wymondham	8.2	800	10.0	42	1
Gt. Easton	6.5	667	9.7	14	-

servicing the population of the hinterland was relatively more important to the maintenance of the degree of service provision available, than was the case with Leicester or Loughborough. These differences will be considered in more detail when the settlements are separately described in a later chapter.

Amongst the other settlements one of them - viz: Market Bosworth - stood out with an index of concentration of service facility comparable to those of the market towns. The reason for its high index would appear to be its isolation from any settlement with a reasonable standard of service provision. The nearest market town was Hinckley, six miles away, and in other directions, the market towns stand at even greater distances. Thus, although it did not have by any means a complete range of service provision (only 11 out of the 21 services), yet it had a sufficient range of shops to provide for many of the needs of the population in the surrounding villages and hamlets; it was the only non-market settlement with a bank thus providing facilities for farmers and others not wishing to travel to the neighbouring market towns; and it had a small weekly stock sale. It, therefore, remained a settlement of some importance in the urban hierarchy by virtue of its location, more or less at the fringe of the hinterlands of four of the market towns.

In the eastern half of the county the regular distribution of smaller service centres is again apparent. In most cases they

are the same settlements determined as subsidiary centres in the analysis of 1831. Some of the settlements which appeared in that analysis as subsidiary centres, however, do not emerge as having been of importance in 1851. The interval between these smaller centres had increased to about six miles. As the hinterlands of the market towns were of a six to seven mile radius in most instances the smaller settlements lay at or near the peripheries of the hinterlands. (see Fig. 27). The service provision in these small centres was, as has already been demonstrated, very incomplete and they offered little competition to the market towns in the supply of services apart from those in most common use.

In the north west of the county Castle Donington and Kegworth had similar indices of concentration of service facilities. This duplicated feature of service provision in two almost adjacent settlements had survived from medieval times when both had been granted market rights. In 1831 both had had more than 50 workers in the retail trades and in this period the annual fairs in both the settlements continued to be held. The persistence of the duplicated feature would appear to have been due to the position of the two settlements on main roads. Castle Donington stands on the Birmingham to Nottingham road and Kegworth on the Leicester to Derby road. (see Fig. 6). They would thus both have functions as thoroughfare towns located at some distance from the nearest market town and would serve the immediately adjacent settlements with some of the services required. A more logical location for a

subsidiary centre in this area would have been at the junction of the two roads a couple of miles to the north. At this place, however, the Trent valley is liable to flood. (see Fig.5).

In the west of the county two other subsidiary settlements appeared in juxtaposition. No explanation for the development of two centres instead of one can be suggested, apart from the equal initiative in the inhabitants of the two places in establishing service facilities. Five facilities were common to each place and hence the local service area of Measham must have been in a north-westerly direction while that of Appleby was to the south-east.

By a detailed analysis of the provision of the retailing and professional services it has been possible to establish a hierarchy of service settlements ranging from the settlements with but one or two services through to the market towns with a full range of facilities available. From different sources of information and from an examination of the situation from different points of view the most constant feature has been the dominance of the market towns in the hierarchy of service units and it is these settlements and their associated hinterlands with which the remainder of this mid-nineteenth study will be primarily concerned.

The distribution of one other set of centralised services remains to be examined, however. At the beginning of this section it was pointed out that by the mid-nineteenth century towns were fulfilling additional functions as the central towns

of 'ad hoc' administrative units. The importance of these administrative divisions in both reflecting and in patterning 'spheres of influence' will be discussed when we consider the hinterlands of the market towns. At this stage we need only to examine the use made of settlements for administrative purposes. Eight administrative services in existence at about the middle of the nineteenth century have been examined. The number of these services for which a settlement acted as the centre will give a quantitative guide to its relative importance in this phase of the central place scheme. The result of the analysis is illustrated in Fig.15.

Once again the dominant centres are the market towns in each of which local headquarters of seven or eight of the services are located. In no other settlement are more than five services provided.

There are a second group of settlements which are the central towns for 3, 4, or 5 of the services. They include three of the places which we previously noted as important subsidiary servicing centres - viz: Billesdon, Market Bosworth and Castle Donington. Ibstock and Syston appeared on Fig.14 with an index of S.P. which might not, therefore, have been related entirely to the provision of facilities to the locally resident population. As centres for some aspects of administration they might well also have been utilised as subsidiary service centres. Whitwick had been chosen as the 'administrative' centre for the coalfield area whereas in the provision of retailing services we saw that Coalville was of the greatest

LEICESTERSHIRE. MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY CENTRES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

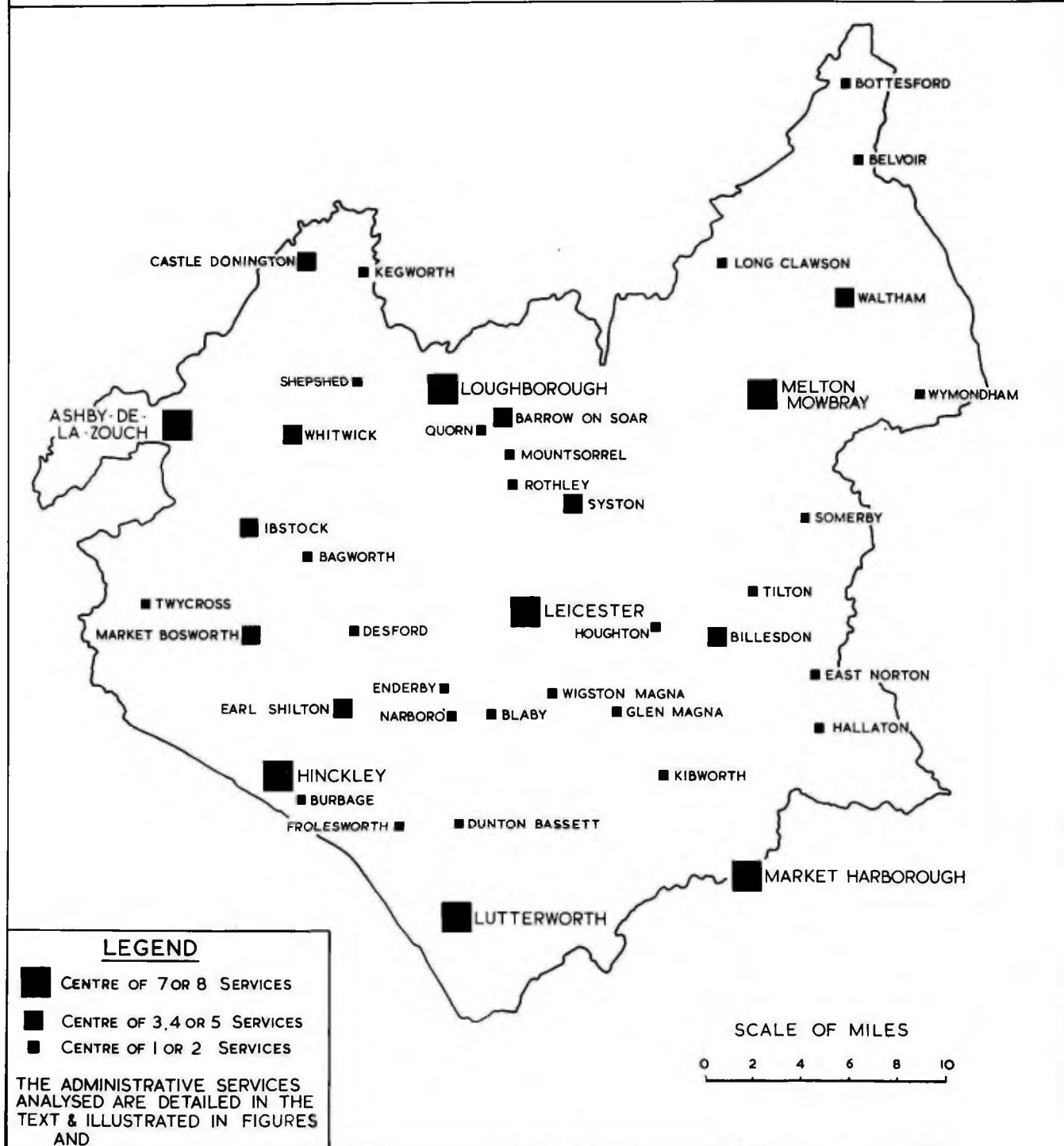


FIG. 15.

importance. This, however, serves to emphasise the lack of a centre for the increasing population of this area, thus confirming the dispersed nature of the service facilities which was apparent in the analysis of 1831. In the Soar valley several settlements had administrative functions and the situation was similar to the distribution of other service facilities (see Figs. 13 and 14) . Barrow's greater importance was in the way of an 'accident' for of the three services provided by the settlement two were related to its function as a poor law union town.

The third group of settlements comprising those which offered one or two of the services included many of the 22 settlements which were distinguished as subsidiary service centres in the 1851 analysis. This is especially noticeable in the eastern part of the county.

Therefore, in spite of divergences, the overall picture of administrative centres shows a situation similar to that revealed in an examination of the other service facilities provided by the settlements of the county. This is most strikingly true in so far as the dominant positions of the market towns was concerned.

CHAPTER THREE.

THE HINTERLANDS OF THE MARKET TOWNS BASED ON AN EXAMINATION OF THE MID NINETEENTH CENTURY TRANSPORT FACILITIES.

The importance of the market towns in 1851 in providing a comprehensive range of service facilities has been demonstrated in Chapter Two. The seven towns provided the overwhelming majority of services in Leicestershire and in this and succeeding chapters an attempt will be made to delimit their areas of influence. As in 1800, however, it must be borne in mind that some market towns peripheral to the county provided facilities to certain areas of Leicestershire and these must also be taken into consideration. (see Fig. 92).

Transport facilities were, and, indeed, still are, the key to the successful integration of a town with its hinterland. In fact, as other writers have suggested, and as will become abundantly clear later in this thesis, transport facilities are one of the most important factors influencing the extent of any town's sphere of influence. It is, therefore, essential that the transport situation in the middle of the nineteenth century be considered in some detail.

At this period the roads were almost the sole means by which communication between town and country could be effected. The canals were used predominantly for long distance inter-urban traffic and railways in Leicestershire were very much in their infancy at this date although their importance in several

specific instances will be detailed later in this chapter.

The turnpikes were the only routes along which a rapidly moving conveyance could operate and the side roads, which had no systematic repair until the County Highway Districts were formed in 1862, were suitable only for the slow moving carriers' carts or the movement of stock on the hoof.

There were 22 Turnpike Trusts in Leicestershire by the time the network was completed in the early years of the 19th. century. The network of tolled roads is shown in Fig. 16. ⁽ⁱ⁾ This diagram brings out clearly the fact that most of the turnpikes were constructed essentially to improve inter-urban communications. Thus from Melton Mowbray radiate turnpikes to the neighbouring towns of Grantham, Oakham, Leicester and Nottingham. Only around Ashby-de-la-Zouch were local turnpikes opened and there in connection with the traffic from the coal mines of the district and not to provide easier communications into the town itself. Thus these roads would be only of secondary value for providing communications between a market town and its hinterland. Many villages remained isolated several miles or more from the nearest turnpiked road.

However, certain evidence does show that market-day traffic between the towns and their hinterlands did make use of the turnpikes where this was practicable. Fig 18 shows the daily routes of carriers' carts into the towns and it

(i) (H. of Commons Papers. Income and Expenditure of the Turnpike Trusts. 1836)

LEICESTERSHIRE TURNPIKE TRAFFIC 1829.

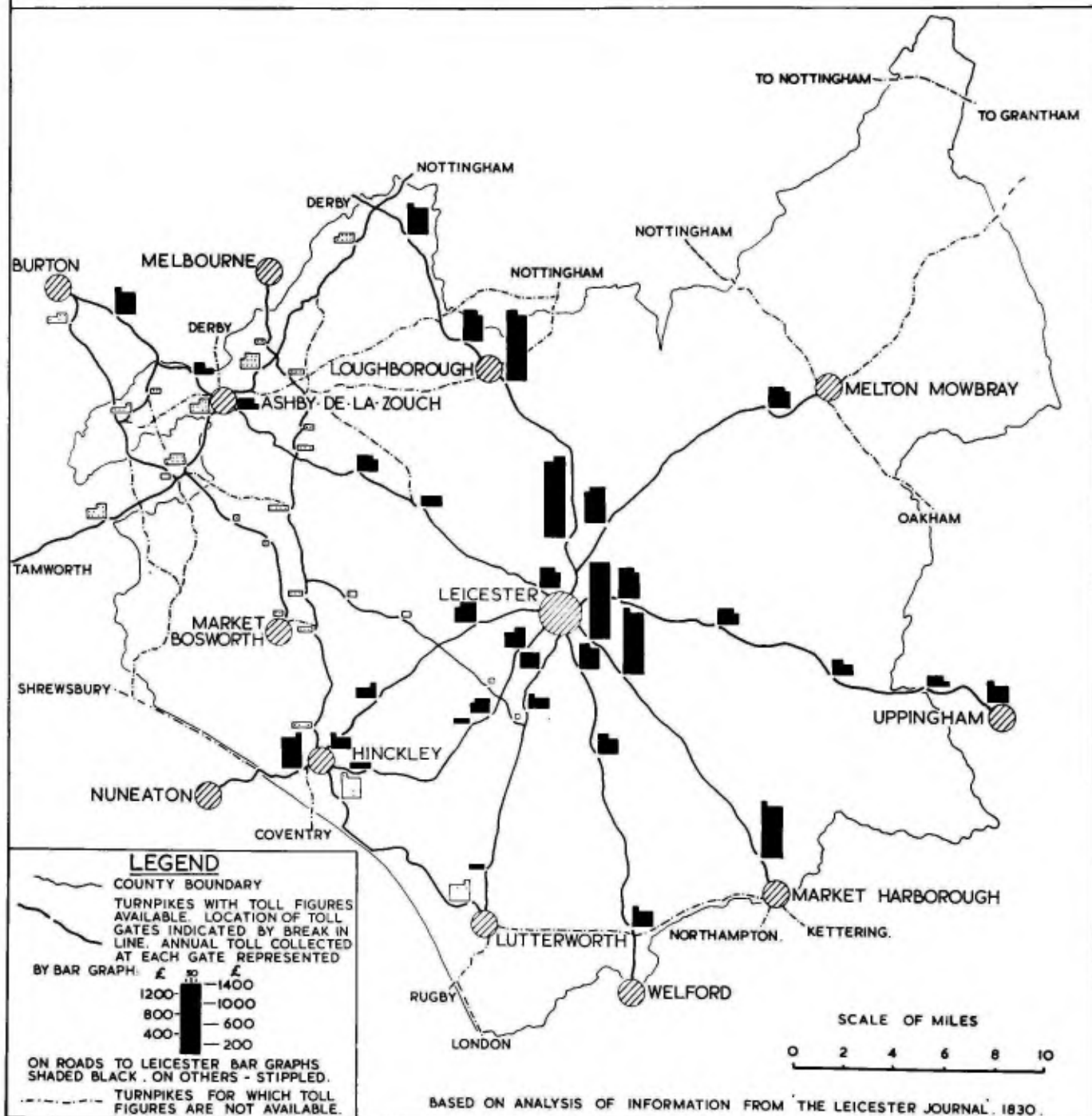


FIG. 16.

indicates clearly that the turnpikes, especially in the case of Leicester, acted as the main arteries of local communication. Carts from villages standing off a turnpiked route generally utilised them for at least a part of the journey. More specifically the evidence from the tolls collected on several of the roads is available for confirmation of this point. In Fig. 16 are shown the tolls collected at each gate on most of the roads in the county for 1829. (This early date has been chosen because in the following two decades the coming of the railway greatly affected the prosperity of some routes; for example, on the Loughborough to Derby road the tolls fell by 60% between 1834 and 1849, the Midland Counties railway having been opened in 1840, and on the Leicester to Lutterworth road, almost paralleled by the Leicester and Rugby railway, the tolls fell from £711 to £556.⁽ⁱ⁾ On the Leicester to Uppingham road the following tolls were realised at the several gates: Humberstone - £581; Houghton - £280; Tugby - £241; Wardley Lane - £259; Uppingham - £315. At Tugby, therefore the lowest tolls were collected. Towards both Leicester and Uppingham succeeding gates collected higher tolls suggesting the gradual building up of local traffic as either town was approached. The same feature is observable on the road from Leicester to Hinckley on which the tolls at the three gates were £370; £211; and £216. On other roads into Leicester the increase in tolls as the city is approached can

(i) (H. of Commons papers. Income and Expenditure of the Turnpike Trusts 1836 to 1852)

be clearly seen and on the Ashby to Tamworth turnpike the tolls are larger as the two towns are approached. Thus to some extent at least the development of the turnpike system had made communication between a market town and its hinterland somewhat easier and more effective. Dickinson has suggested that the introduction of the turnpikes led to the concentration of marketing on fewer towns because they allowed an increase in the area which could be served from a town with such road facilities.⁽ⁱ⁾ Within Leicestershire it has been suggested that this fact may have contributed to the late 18th century decline of Market Bosworth as a marketing centre. It was isolated from the turnpike system until late in the 18th century whereas Hinckley six miles to the south was well served much earlier than this and, therefore, probably captured a good deal of Bosworth's trade.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Elsewhere in the county, however, the turnpike system appeared to have had little effect on the rise or fall of the more important service centres although the network of routes available to Leicester may have resulted in that town expanding its influence at the expense of the smaller market towns.

The use of side roads, in the areas of the county not served by the turnpikes, would make communications slower and less effective but in an age when speed was not so important, and when the need for exchange between town and country was limited, this would not matter to any great extent. All that

(i) (Dickinson, R.E. The Distribution and Functions of the Smaller Urban Settlements of East Anglia. Geog. 17. 1932. p.19)

(ii) (See also above p.91-98)

really mattered was for some form of transport to be available so that the surplus produce from the farms could be taken into the towns and goods and other services from the town out into the villages. Therefore, it is necessary to examine first of all over what area of the county some form of transport was available. The first two diagrams on Fig. 16 show accessibility to transport facilities at this period. 1831 represents the era before the opening of any railway in the county; in 1851, the situation had been modified to some extent by railway development.

In 1831 most parts of the county were within one mile of a route taken by a carriers' cart on its market day journey. The only areas with transport facilities close at hand on a daily basis were along lines of main roads from Leicester to Hinckley, Melton, Loughborough, and Uppingham, from villages to the south of the city with daily carriers into Leicester, and an area to the east and west of Loughborough by means of daily carts into that town.

On the other hand, even in 1831 the areas of the county which were more than one mile from transport facilities were insignificant and included only a few nucleated settlements none of which lay more than one and a half mile from the nearest route. In 1851, these areas had shrunk even smaller so that no settlement was located more than a mile from transport facilities. At the same time there had been an extension in the area of the county which were within reach of daily facilities. This was due to two factors. Firstly, there

LEICESTERSHIRE: DIAGRAMS SHOWING ACCESSIBILITY TO MEANS OF TRANSPORT

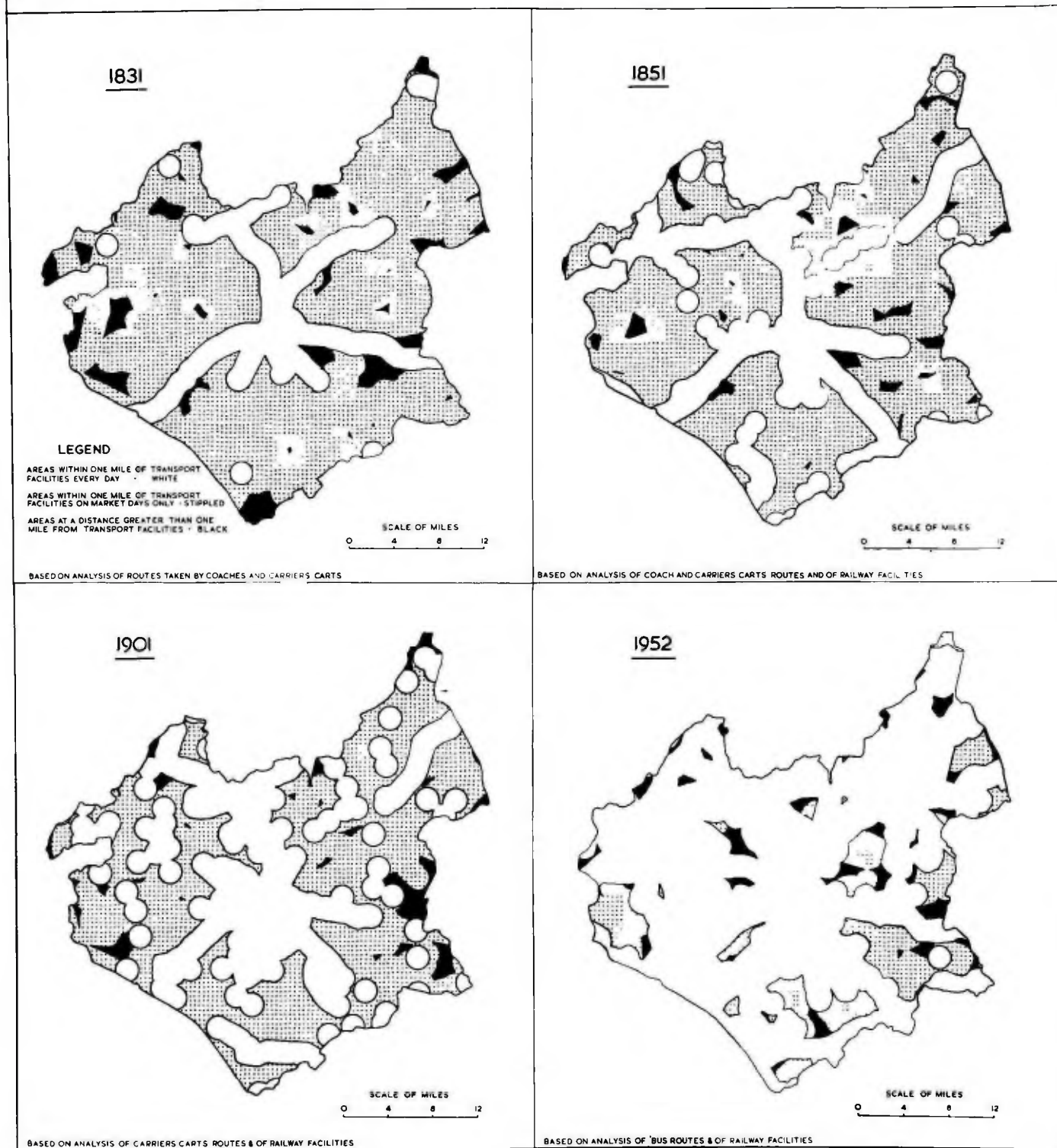


FIG 17.

had been an increase in the numbers of daily carriers' routes; for example from Melton to Grantham, from Leicester to Market Harborough, from Loughborough to Ashby, from Lutterworth to Rugby. All these were inter-urban routes but nevertheless they served a considerable number of settlements in between the towns.

Secondly, the beginning of the railway system gave daily facilities to quite a large number of villages. After the opening of the Leicester and Swannington line in 1832 there was a steady expansion of the network until by 1851 all the market towns save Hinckley and Lutterworth had rail connection. All the lines except one served Leicester. Northwestwards from the city ran the line to Burton-on-Trent with 11 stations in Leicestershire; to the north down the Soar valley ran the Midland Counties Railway providing direct access to Nottingham and Derby and with stations in Leicestershire at Syston, Sileby, Barrow and Loughborough; branching off from this at Syston was the railway to Melton, Oakham and Peterborough with a line of stations in the valley of the Wreake clearly standing out in the diagram; to the south the continuation of the M.C.R. to Rugby provided daily transport facilities for a dozen villages. The line not passing through Leicester was the Rugby, Market Harborough, and Stamford railway, opened in 1850, and giving transport facilities to the villages along the extreme southern edge of the county.

However, in the county as a whole in 1851 no more than

50 villages out of the total of 330 lay within reach of railway stations and thus local connections to the market town depended very largely on the weekly carriers' cart. These as we have already seen provided facilities to every nucleated settlement in the county. Thus the situation might perhaps be summarised by recognising the integration of town and country by transport facilities although over much of the county the integration was but weakly expressed in the infrequent journeys of a carrier between village and market town.

Having examined the overall situation in the county, it is now necessary to turn to analyse in more detail the transport relationships between each market town and the surrounding districts. As observed at the beginning of the chapter, the sphere of influence of any given centre will to a very large extent depend upon the transport facilities available to it. At the present day transport facilities between a town and its hinterland provide facilities for intercourse for purposes of daily work, education, recreation, shopping and many other pursuits; in the mid 19th century movement was almost entirely for marketing and trading purposes and the transport facilities are a reflection of this.

Fig. 18 shows the daily movement of carriers' carts into Leicestershire and peripheral market towns in 1851. The diagram aims to bring out the intensification of transport facilities which occurred around a town on its market day.

DAILY ROUTES OF CARRIERS' CARTS TO LEICESTERSHIRE & PERIPHERAL CENTRES IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

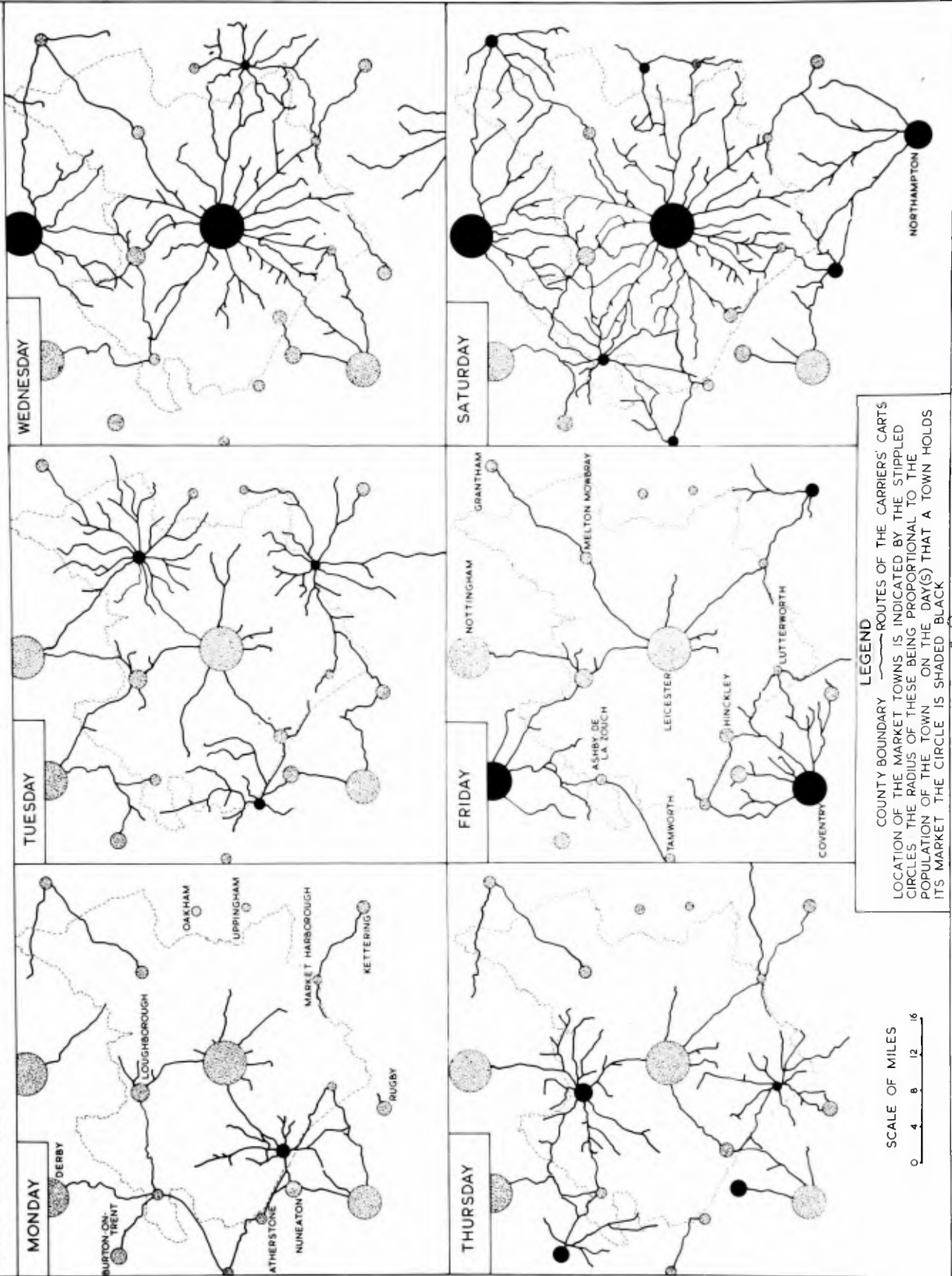


FIG 1

On Monday the market was held at Hinckley and around the town is developed a network of carriers' routes extending as far as Nuneaton, Lutterworth, and Atherstone, and serving many villages to the north and east. On this day in the remainder of the county the carriers' routes are restricted almost entirely to inter-urban services plus some local development around Loughborough and Leicester.

Tuesday markets were held at Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough and Atherstone and here in each case there is a development of local services into the town. Thus the pattern was repeated throughout the week and only in the case of Nuneaton (Warwicks) with its market on Thursday, did a network of routes fail to develop around the town. On Saturdays the picture became a little complicated for Leicester and Nottingham held their principal markets on that day and an extensive carriers' system developed around each place. In addition other markets were held at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and five of the peripheral towns so that most areas of the county, with the exception of the Melton district, were served by transport facilities.

Both this analysis and the previous one have shown that it was only on market days that transport facilities between town and country were of general importance and therefore it is these facilities which must be taken into consideration when attempting to assess the sphere of influence of the market towns.

Before this is done, however, some indication must be

given of the nature of the evidence. It has already been mentioned that details of the carriers' carts have been obtained from the county directories. For the city of Leicester these details were available as early as 1793 (see Fig. 12) but for the smaller market towns it was not until the 1830's that similar information was given. For each market town there was a transport directory and in this were detailed the coaches running through the town; the railway facilities, if any; and the carriers working into the town. For each settlement from which a carrier was available was indicated the name of the carrier(s) concerned; the day(s) the service operates; the name of the inn from which the return journey started together with the time of departure. Any cart, may, of course, have served more than one village - indeed invariably it did, as on the way to its destination it would pass through other settlements in which stops could easily be made - and thus a single cart which left the town was shown under several village heads. However, by checking the name of the owner and the place and time of departure duplication can be avoided and, additionally, the actual route of the cart determined. In the cases where a cart is shown as only serving one village then its route might be intelligently guessed as the shortest one between the town and the village.

In the 1830's it was ascertained by a comparison of Directories that the lists were not comprehensive but by 1849 with the publication of "Hagar's Directory of the County of

Leicester" (checked against two other directories of the same period) it would seem that the lists were sufficiently accurate to make analyses of transport facilities for each market town possible. From this information the diagram already referred to and Figs. 19, 20 and 21 have been constructed.

Figs. 19 and 20 illustrate the areas from which transport facilities are available to each of the seven market towns (plus ~~£~~ Coalville, to make comparisons with the 20th century easier). Each diagram has been constructed by enclosing the area lying within one mile of a carriers' route to the centre, or within one mile of a railway station from which a direct service to the centre is available. They are, therefore, the maximum areas which might be included in a town's hinterland in so far as a hinterland is dependent upon transport being available to the centre. As these maximum areas, of course, will never be achieved, owing to competition on the peripheries with other centres which are also accessible, they may be termed AREAS OF THEORETICAL ACCESSIBILITY.

Significant points arising from each diagram will now be discussed. In the case of Leicester the most significant feature is that the area of theoretical accessibility extended over most of the county. Market day carriers journeyed^{ed} from as far away as Derby (30 miles) presumably to collect traffic from the areas of the county beyond Loughborough; from Great Easton in the extreme south east corner of Leicestershire

MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY ACCESSIBILITY TO LEICESTERSHIRE CENTRES

BASED ON ANALYSES OF ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT FACILITIES 1849-51

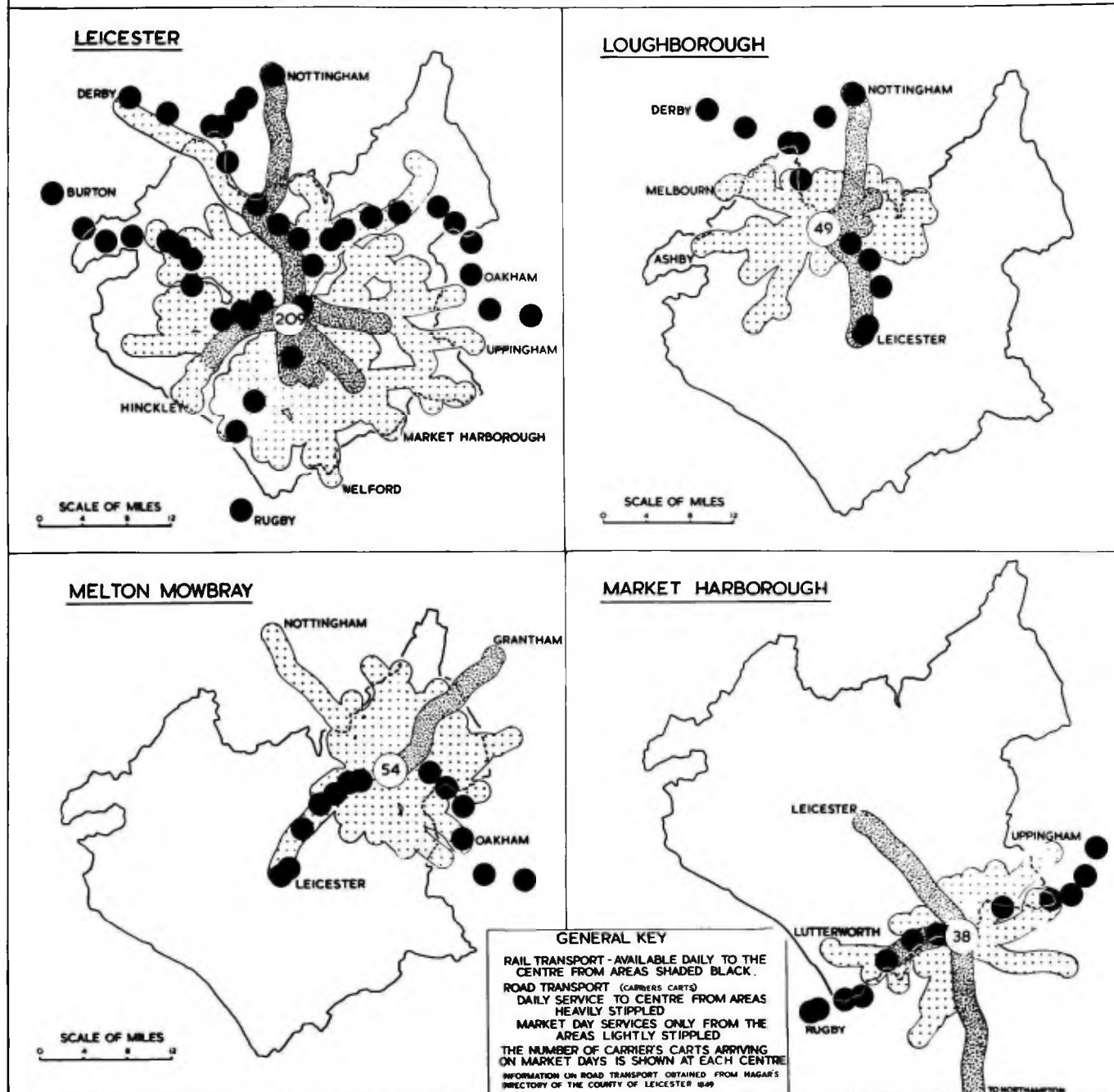


FIG. 19.

rather more than 20 miles distant - a journey time of at least four hours; from Uppingham in Rutlandshire, a similar distance away, but with a reduced journey time as the result of a turnpiked route being used for the whole distance; from Welford, 16 miles away to the south in Northamptonshire; and from Shenton and Sibson, in the south-west of the county and also about 16 miles from the city. Indeed, the parts of the hinterlands of Market Harborough, Lutterworth, Hinckley, Loughborough, Oakham, and Uppingham which lay between their respective centres and the city of Leicester were, in the main, also served by market day carriers' carts to Leicester. Had they not been utilised then we may assume that they would not have made the journeys; as they did, it would appear that even in the middle of the nineteenth century, that the smaller market towns were perhaps losing custom to the superior attractions at Leicester. Only Melton and Ashby seemed not so prone to Leicester competition but even in these cases carts to Leicester were available from the towns themselves.

It should be borne in mind that Leicester had two market days and that whereas the market day services shown in this diagram were those available on Saturday yet approximately 120 of them - out of 209 - were also available on Wednesday.

The daily services to Leicester fell into two main categories. Firstly, the daily carriers routes which served

many populous villages to the south of Leicester and were probably concerned with the collection of industrial products from these villages rather than with marketing purposes. These villages were developing small scale industry at this period, connected with the hosiery industry at Leicester, and daily transport facilities would be necessary so that supplies of raw material could be regularly made available from Leicester and the finished articles returned to the warehouses in the city. The other daily carriers' routes - down the Soar valley to Loughborough and thence to Nottingham-also linked villages and towns with like industrial interests.

Secondly, rail facilities were available from more than 40 stations each with several daily trains to Leicester. These facilities extended to some extent the area from which Leicester was accessible; for example, from beyond Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Melton Mowbray.

Loughborough had less than one quarter the number of market day carts ~~as compared with the number~~ available to Leicester. The extent of the area accessible on market day was greater to east and west than to the north and south for in the latter directions Nottingham/Derby and Leicester respectively were centres of greater attraction. Thus in the direction of Leicester, except on the direct route up the Soar valley, market day carts were only drawn from an area within four miles of the town. To east and west, however, Melton Mowbray and Ashby-de-la-Zouch respectively were less

important competitors. From the east, therefore, carts journeyed to Loughborough from places up to 10 miles distant. From the west there were carts from Barlestone ($12\frac{1}{2}$ miles) Bagworth (10 miles), and Coalville (9 miles) and these places were nearer either to Leicester or to Ashby. In south Nottinghamshire villages up to six miles distance had facilities to Loughborough.

Daily facilities to Loughborough were limited to carts moving from Leicester and Nottingham and from a couple of villages to the east of Loughborough and which may have been taking out-work from Loughborough's factories.

In the case of Melton Mowbray the most outstanding feature of its area of theoretical accessibility was its ^{symmetry} uniformity in extent from the town. In each direction, except directly west, all villages within an eight mile radius were within one mile of a carriers' route. The extreme north-east corner of Leicestershire was not served but quite a number of villages in Rutland and south Nottinghamshire had weekly facilities to Melton.

The daily railway facilities, except in the case of Ashwell on the line to Oakham, duplicated the areas served by the carriers.

At Market Harborough we see a similar feature to that which we noted in the case of Loughborough - viz: the greater extent of the area accessible to the town from east and west. In this case the competing settlements to north and south were

Leicester and Northampton respectively. In the analysis of areas accessible to Leicester it was noted that market day facilities existed from most of the villages immediately to the north of Market Harborough and similarly to the south many of the villages could reach Northampton on Wednesdays and Saturdays (see Fig.18). To each and west, however, Lutterworth and Uppingham offered less formidable opposition and carriers from both these towns (both at distances of 12 miles) moved into Market Harborough on Tuesdays serving other villages en route.

Daily facilities from Harborough led north and south to Leicester and Northampton; inter-urban transport in lieu of rail connection. Railway facilities at this date serve to emphasise the east-west orientation of road transport facilities. Populous villages in the Welland valley were brought into daily contact with the town.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch's market day carts were relatively few in number. Moreover, the pattern of the area which they serve varies from the pattern established around the towns which have already been examined. Instead of a comprehensively served area, with no village more than a mile from a route, around Ashby the carts moved in from considerable distances along the main turnpiked roads leaving settlements between these roads a greater distance than a mile from transport facilities. For example, there are carts from Loughborough (13 miles), Atherstone (15 miles), Market Bosworth (9 miles),

MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY ACCESSIBILITY TO LEICESTERSHIRE CENTRES

BASED ON ANALYSES OF ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT FACILITIES 1849-51

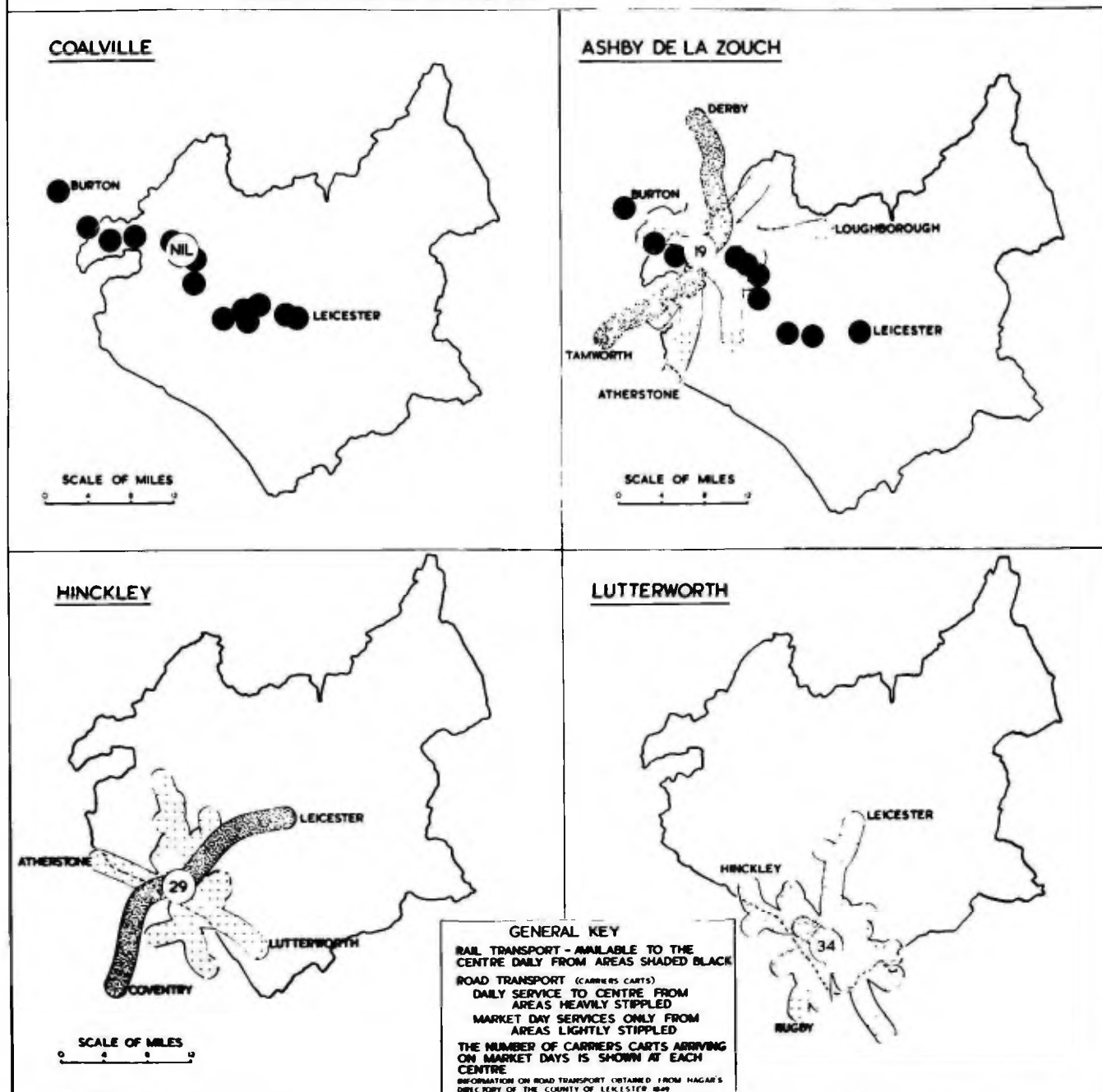


FIG. 20.

and Castle Donington (10 miles) but on the other hand there are settlements much nearer to the town which do not have transport facilities available. For example, between the routes from Bosworth and Atherstone, the settlements of Newton Burgoland, Swebstone, Shackerstone and Congerstone, all within seven miles of Ashby, lie more than one mile from the nearest carriers' route.

Hinckley was one of the two market towns in the county which in 1851 remained isolated from the railway system. The nearest railway station was at Nuneaton in Warwickshire, some five miles away. Not until 1862 was the railway to be extended to Hinckley and a further two years ~~was~~^{ere} to elapse before the connection to Leicester was achieved. Hence in 1851 the daily carts to and from Hinckley were probably providing the town with outlets for the industrial production of the town and suburbs.

Although we saw in an earlier chapter that service function in Hinckley had become secondary to its industrial functions by the middle of the nineteenth century, yet the fact that it was still an important trading centre for the surrounding countryside is clearly brought out in the evidence of 29 carriers' carts weekly visiting the town. West of the town, apart from the route from Atherstone, there were no market day services into Hinckley presumably because these areas looked rather to Atherstone and Nuneaton for their services. To the south-east, however, Leicestershire villages

as far as Lutterworth and Warwickshire villages as far as Pailton and Wolvey, each more than nine miles distant, had weekly carriers to Hinckley. Immediately to the north of the town there was a considerable area within one mile of a route even as far north as Ibstock, 12 miles distant along the turnpike to Melbourne. It will be remembered that in this direction the nearest market town was Ashby-de-la-Zouch, over 15 miles away, and hence the facilities to Hinckley were no more than one would have expected.

Finally, in the case of Lutterworth, we note that its area is not an inconsiderable one. 34 carts made the journey to the town - almost twice as many as at Ashby. All villages within six miles of the town had market day connections with Lutterworth but in addition to this general area there were also other areas a greater distance from the town, served by carts from Leicester and Hinckley, and from West Haddon, 12 miles away in Northamptonshire.

The only daily facility into Lutterworth was the omnibus which travelled between Lutterworth and the railway station at Ullesthorpe on the Leicester and Rugby section of the M.C.R. This was to remain Lutterworth's only tenuous connection with the railway system until the opening of the Great Central line from London to Leicester and Sheffield at the end of the century.

A glance at the areas of theoretical accessibility to the seven centres will indicate that from large parts of the county

more than one of the market towns could have been reached by carriers' cart. In some instances, of course, this was the result of settlements lying on a route between two centres which had transport facilities available between them. This did not necessarily indicate that both centres were used for obtaining service and supplies as the journey may have been made between the two towns merely as a matter of convenience. For example, there was a carrier working from Hinckley to Lutterworth on the latter's market day. This carrier happened to reside in Hinckley and his journey was undertaken from there merely as a matter of convenience. It was very likely that there was little effective traffic to and from Lutterworth until settlements nearer to that town were reached. In other instances there were carriers to two market towns from a given settlement not on the direct route joining the places, because both centres were used to some extent by the population of the settlement. For instance, from Whitwick and Coalville there were carriers carts to both Loughborough and Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

If hinterlands of the market towns, based on the transport facilities which were available to them, are to be established, then in the cases of those settlements which had facilities to more than one centre a decision has to be taken as to which hinterland they are to be allocated. This decision has been taken on an 'ad hoc' basis for each settlement so placed but the following factors are those which have primarily been considered.

Firstly, and most important, the number of units of transport available to one centre as compared to the number available to the other(s).

Secondly, the comparative distances involved in travelling to the two centres. This factor only became of any significance when there were an equal number of units of transport available to each or every one of the centres. It is assumed in these cases that the nearer centre, as far as distance is concerned, was the most accessible for it was also quicker to reach and the cost of transportation was presumably less.

From this analysis Fig. 21 has been constructed showing the spheres of influence of the seven Leicestershire centres based on the market-day transport facilities which were available to them. Within each hinterland the transport facilities available to the centre, suggest that that centre was most likely to provide the majority of the services required by the population. The influence of a centre does not stop abruptly at its hinterland boundary, however, for as has been demonstrated many settlements had transport facilities to more than one centre both of which must, therefore, have had a certain amount of influence. A hinterland boundary merely delimits an area within which the influence of the central settlement is more pronounced than that of any other town offering similar facilities.

Within each hinterland on Fig. 21 there are also indicated

MID 19TH CENTURY HINTERLANDS OF LEICESTERSHIRE CENTRES BASED ON MARKET DAY TRANSPORT FACILITIES

LE LEICESTER
Lo LOUGHBOROUGH
A ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH
H HINCKLEY
Lu LUTTERWORTH
Mh MARKET HARBOUROUGH
Mm MELTON MOWBRAY

SHOWING DENSITY OF FACILITIES WITHIN HINTERLANDS

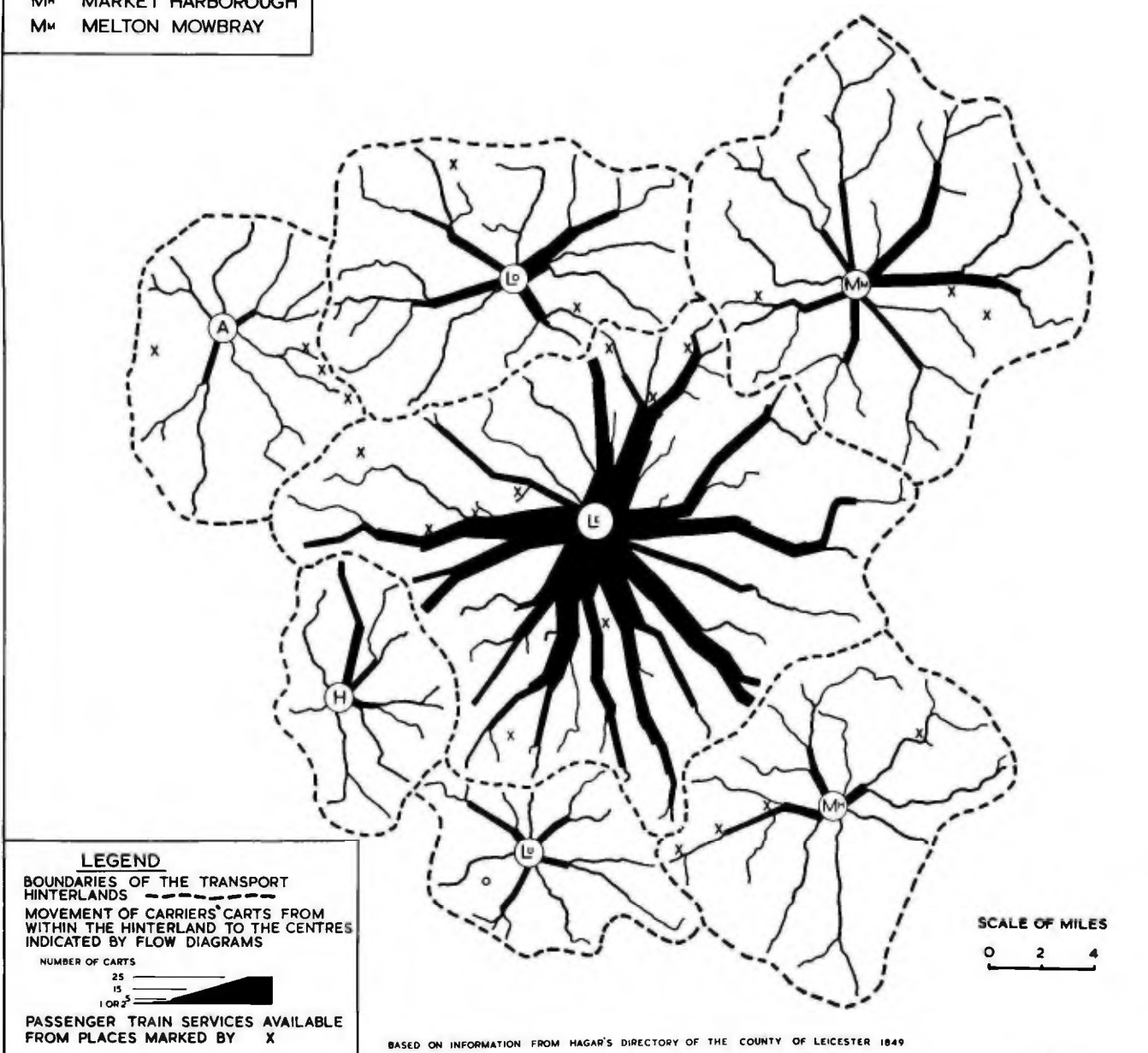


FIG. 21.

by flow diagrams the density of the transport facilities available to the centre (N.B. These are not normal traffic flow maps as certain flows have been truncated by the boundary of the hinterland).

The hinterlands of the towns varied greatly in extent. (See Table 9). Leicester's hinterland was about 250 square miles in extent while those of Lutterworth and Hinckley were only about a fifth of that size.

The circle of hinterlands around that of Leicester was completed by those of Atherstone to the west, and Oakham and Uppingham to the east. The greater distance of these centres - viz. 18 to 20 miles - from Leicester compared to the distances between Leicester and the county market towns - viz. 12 to 17 miles - largely accounted for the greater east-west extent of the city's hinterland.

Leicester's hinterland invariably stretched more than half of the distance in the directions of the other Leicestershire centres. The distance from Leicester to Loughborough, for example, is 12 miles but the hinterland boundary lay only a little more than 4 miles from Loughborough. Examining the facilities to the two centres from the settlements in this area, we see that from Sileby there were three carriers' carts to Leicester in addition to the services of trains whereas to Loughborough there was only one cart and the rail services available. From Mountsorrel there were 9 carriers' to Leicester on Saturdays but only 3 to Loughborough on Thursdays. Thus in this case there would appear to be little

doubt that the bulk of the traffic was oriented towards Leicester.

The boundary of the hinterland between Leicester and Market Harborough lay 10 miles from the former place and only 5 miles from the latter. From Kibworth, some two miles to the north of the hinterland boundary there were 13 market day carriers to Leicester and only two to Market Harborough. On the road from Leicester to Hinckley there was a comparable wide discrepancy in the number of units of transport which moved to the two centres from the midway point along the route.

Only in the case of the Leicester to Ashby route did a similar feature not arise. On this particular route the number of carts moving to Leicester was comparatively small. As is apparent from Fig. 21 it had less traffic than any other of the main roads into the city. This may have been a result of the opening of the Leicester and Swannington railway some 20 years earlier which, having had a considerable period in which to establish itself, had taken traffic away from the road. In the opposite direction there were no facilities to Ashby from beyond Coalville and hence some of the settlements lying on this route had better transport facilities to Loughborough whose extensive area of theoretical accessibility in this district was noted earlier in the chapter.

Away from the direct routes between Leicester and the smaller centres there was an even greater extension of Leicester's hinterland boundary. Between Lutterworth and

Market Harborough, for example, there was a southward extension of Leicester's hinterland to a maximum distance of over 12 miles from the city, whereas the distance to the two smaller towns from this area was only a half of this mileage. This was a result of five carriers being available to Leicester along the turnpike from Welford whilst there were no facilities at all to Lutterworth and only a single carrier to Market Harborough.

The feature was even more pronounced between Hinckley and Ashby-de-la-Zouch which, in part, was accounted for by the greater distance between these towns - viz. 15 miles - than between Hinckley and Lutterworth or Lutterworth and Market Harborough, for example. Additionally, transport facilities to Leicester from the area between Ashby and Hinckley were good; much better than those to Leicester from the area between Loughborough and Melton, also 15 miles apart. From Market Bosworth, for example, there were five carriers to Leicester, only two to Hinckley, and only one to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Looking at the boundaries of the hinterlands between the smaller centres themselves we find that these more nearly coincide with the midway distance between any two of the centres. Exactly so in the case of Hinckley and Lutterworth, and within a mile of the mid-distance boundary between Lutterworth and Market Harborough. In the north of the county, however, Loughborough's boundary extended rather more than half the distance in the direction of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

Villages on the main road joining these two centres had transport facilities to both but they were rather better in the direction of Loughborough. For example, from Thringstone, 5 miles from Ashby and 8 miles from Loughborough, there were 3 carriers to the latter town and only two to the former. And from Osgathorpe, 6 miles from Ashby and 9 from Loughborough, there were 2 carriers' and 4 carriers' respectively. In 1849, however, the railway from Leicester to Coalville had been extended to Ashby and from the three stations on the eastern fringe of Ashby's hinterland there were far better transport facilities to Ashby than to a more distant Loughborough by means of carriers' carts.

Finally the relationship of the hinterland boundaries to the county boundary might be briefly examined. This is shown in Fig. 25. In the south-west of the county transport facilities to Atherstone were better than those to any Leicestershire centre. Indeed it was noted earlier that the facilities to Hinckley from this part of the county were non-existent. In the south-east of the county transport facilities were oriented towards Uppingham rather than to the more distant Market Harborough. Oakham served a small district in East Leicestershire though in this instance the hinterland boundary between Melton Mowbray and Oakham was several miles removed from the mid-distance boundary in favour of Melton. To the north-east, transport facilities to Grantham were better than those to Melton although once again

the hinterland boundary was further removed from Melton than from Grantham.

On the other hand the Leicestershire towns offered better transport facilities than any other place to large areas of other counties. This was specially true in the case of Market Harborough which had rather more than half of its transport hinterland in Northamptonshire. Loughborough included an area of South Nottinghamshire in its sphere of influence although this did not stretch half-way to the peripheral centre of Nottingham. This is hardly surprising, however, for as we saw in Fig. 18 Nottingham was on a par with Leicester in the transport facilities which it had to offer.

Apart from these two transgressions of the county boundary there were also smaller areas of other counties included in the hinterlands of Ashby-de-la-Zouch (Derbyshire), Hinckley (Warwickshire), Lutterworth (Warwickshire and Northants) and Melton Mowbray (Nottinghamshire and Rutland).

Having examined the extent of the hinterlands it is now necessary to consider the density of the traffic network within them. This was a function of several variable factors including the number of units of transport available and the mileage of routes which these covered. These factors viewed in conjunction with the population structure of the hinterland will give information as to the intensity of exchange between a centre and its tributary area.

Table 9 sets out to indicate some of these relationships. Reference has already been made, when the areas of theoretical accessibility were discussed, to the numbers of carts moving to the different centres. As the table shows, they ranged from 209 in the case of Leicester down to 19 in the case of Ashby. The flow diagrams in Fig. 21 bring out the differences. Traffic moved in and out of Leicester along 13 main routes. The numbers of carriers carts using the different routes ranged from 7 on the Medbourne road to 34 on the Hinckley road and with more than 20 carts on each of the routes leading to Loughborough, Market Harborough and Lutterworth. Outside of Leicester the heaviest flow on any road was that of 15 carts using the road from the east into Loughborough.

Of minor significance at this time, but to which reference must be made, were the rail services into the towns. These have been shown in Table 9 but a little further consideration is necessary. The location of the stations is shown in Fig. 21 except in two or three instances where they are obscured by the flow diagrams.

The 11 stations within Leicester's sphere of influence are located on five lines of railway into the city. Broughton Astley and Wigston on the line from Rugby with three trains daily into the city; Bagworth and Kirby Muxloe on the line from Burton with four trains a day; Glenfield and Ratby, on the original Leicester and Swannington line with two trains; (Desford is served by all these last six trains); Sileby on the

Table 9

Showing the Density of the Network of Carrier's routes and the rail facilities within the Transport Hinterlands of the Leicestershire Market Towns in the mid-Nineteenth Century						
Hinterland of -	Number of market day carriers carts	Area of Hinterland in Square Miles (approx.)	Miles of roads traversed within hinterland by carriers' carts	Average length of carriers' route per sq. mile of the Hinterland	Rail Facilities	
					a No. of stations in hinterland	b No. of mk. day trains to centre
Leicester	209	250	195	.78	11	20
Melton Mowbray	54	160	105	.65	4	8
Mk. Harborough	38	120	64	.53	4	6
Loughborough	49	110	75	.68	2	8
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	19	85	42	.50	4	8
Hinckley	29	55	36	.65	-	-
Lutterworth	34	50	38	.76	-	-

railway from Loughborough with three trains and Syston on the same line but with four additional trains from Loughborough and four more from the branch from Melton, these latter ones also serving the stations at Rearsby and Brooksby. Thus there were a total of 20 trains daily into the city, about a third of which arrived too late in the day to be of value to people visiting Leicester to use its marketing and other trading facilities.

Whether rail facilities were of any significance at this period in bringing about contact between a town and its hinterland is difficult to assess. The cost of tickets certainly put rail travel out of the reach of the majority of the population and in none of the mid-nineteenth newspapers consulted nor in any of the contemporary timetables was any reference made to such facilities as market day tickets or market day trains. However, it is difficult to imagine that the facilities were not used and the indirect evidence of the inadequate carriers' services from Leicester on the route used by the longest established railway line would point to the rising importance of the railway as a competitor.

As the table brings out, to the other towns rail facilities from places within their hinterlands were of much less importance. Melton had stations in its hinterland only at Asfordby and Frisby on the Wreak valley line to Leicester and at Saxby and Whissendine on the line from Oakham. Loughborough had only two stations within its hinterland; Kegworth to the north located about a mile from the village of

that name but only a half mile distant from the Nottinghamshire villages of Sutton Bonington and Kingston-upon-Soar; the former a village with over 1200 inhabitants yet with only two carriers to Loughborough; and the latter, although a smaller village of some 300 people, without any road transport facilities to the town. To the south was Barrow station located in the middle of an industrial village with a population of 1736.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch gained railway facilities only in 1849 with the extension of the Leicester and Swannington line to Burton-on-Trent. Within its hinterland were four stations. Indeed these four stations have played a material part in the determination of the hinterland boundary to east and west. From the west there was no evidence of any carriers' carts journeying into the town and thus the station at Moira provided the only transport facilities for the population of this rapidly expanding coal mining district. To the east the stations in the Leicestershire coalfield district at Swannington, Coalville and Bardon made contact with Ashby easy - especially when compared with the longer road journey to Loughborough.

Market Harborough's facilities were not opened until 1850 and as Fig. 21 shows the stations were located in three villages to the west and one to the east from which road facilities were also available.

Rail facilities, then, from hinterlands into the towns

were nowhere of great significance although their importance did vary from centre to centre. In the following analysis of transport facilities they will be ignored. It was indicated at the beginning of this part of the chapter that in addition to the number of carts available to the centre the length of road which they traversed is also of significance in an assessment of the density of transport facilities within a hinterland. In the third column of table 9 are indicated the mileages of road covered by the carts in each hinterland. These distances range from 195 in the case of Leicester's hinterland to 36 miles within the hinterland of Hinckley. The mileage will be related to two factors; firstly to the area of the hinterland and secondly to the number of routes taken by the carts. Therefore in order to compare the densities of the networks in the hinterlands we must establish the relationship between the area and the mileage. Thus in column 4 is shown the average length of carriers' route per square mile of the hinterland. The network is thus the most dense in the case of Leicester but only narrowly beaten into second place is Lutterworth, which has the smallest hinterland. At the bottom of the list is Ashby-de-la-Zouch with an index only two-thirds that of Leicester and Lutterworth. Thus, expressed mathematically is a feature which cannot be readily comprehended from a study of Fig.21. While we can see in Leicester's hinterland that no place was more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles away from a carriers' route and that in the hinterlands of Ashby and Harborough this distance was exceeded. it is

not possible to note any significant variation in

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the density of the networks within the hinterlands of Hinckley and Lutterworth; yet, mathematically, the density in the former was only 66% of that in the latter - not an inconsiderable distinction.

Proceeding, we may now relate the density of the traffic network to the populations of the hinterlands. The populations of the hinterlands have been calculated from the Census Returns for 1851 (N.B. They do not include the populations of the towns themselves). Leicester's hinterland has a population of 50,000 as it included not only extensive agricultural tracts in East Leicestershire but much of the semi-industrialised Soar valley both above and below the town. Fig. 27 shows the distribution of population in the county. Loughborough has the next most populous hinterland, about half the size of Leicester's, and includes the remainder of the Soar valley and large industrial settlements such as Shepshed. The essentially agricultural hinterlands of Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough and Lutterworth, have populations of 19,000, 14,000, and 8,000 respectively. The population and employment structure of the hinterlands will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter of this section.

Thus the following three criteria are to be used in establishing an index to measure the degree of effectiveness of the transport facilities between a centre and its hinterland; the population of the hinterland; the mileage of routes covered by the carriers' within the hinterland; the number of carts available from the hinterland to the centre on

market days. The relationships between these criteria are indicated in table 10.

The relationship between the mileage of carriers' routes and the population is shown in column 2. A higher figure will indicate a more intensive development of routes to the increased benefit of the population. In column three is shown the relationship between the population and the number of market day carts available to the centre. Again a higher figure will indicate a more intensive development of the transport services pro rata of the population. In each case the higher the figure the better the transport facilities available to the population. Therefore, in adding the two figures together we may obtain an Index of Efficiency of transport facilities between a town and its hinterland.

The result for the Leicestershire hinterlands is shown in the final column of table 10, ranging from Lutterworth's index of 9.4 down to Ashby's index of 3.4. For Lutterworth the combination of a small hinterland, with a large number of carts considering the small population, and an excellent coverage by various routes within the hinterland has led to this high index. At Ashby, on the other hand, fewer carts, a less effective cover, and a much higher population needing to be served have combined to give a low index. (Were rail facilities to be taken into account then Ashby's index would have been considerably improved.)

That this index combines the various factors involved

Table 10

Showing Index of Efficiency of road transport facilities between a town and its hinterland					
Hinterland of	Population of the Hinterland	Mileage of carriers' routes per 1000 of the Population	Number of carriers' carts per 1000 of the Population	Index of Efficiency of Transport Facilities	
Lutterworth	7677	4.9	4.5	9.4	
Melton Mowbray	18,585	5.6	3.0	8.6	
Leicester	49,979	3.9	4.2	8.1	
Market Harborough	13,725	4.7	2.8	7.5	
Hinckley	11,623	3.1	2.5	5.6	
Loughborough	26,626	2.8	1.5	4.3	
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	18,149	2.3	1.1	3.4	

quite successfully is indicated by the fact that in no case does any single factor result in a uniformly high or a uniformly low index. For instance, Lutterworth has a small hinterland but has the top index, whereas Hinckley, also with a small hinterland, has an index only a little more than 60% of that of Lutterworth, Melton and Loughborough each receive the same number of carts on market day but their indices are 8.6 and 4.3 respectively. The hinterlands of Ashby and Melton have similar sized populations but the index of the former town is but 40% of that of the latter.

From this rather complicated survey it is possible to see exactly how effective are the road transport facilities to the towns from their respective hinterlands, and thus measure the relative intensity of exchange which took place between town and country; and hence the degree of dependence between a town and its tributary area. Is it, therefore, not significant that the three towns, which are centres for areas essentially agricultural - viz. Lutterworth, Melton Mowbray, and Market Harborough - have the first, second and fourth highest indices. In these cases the surplus products of the countryside would find their way to the market town either by farm transport or by the carriers' and for supplies of other consumer goods, etc. the only place of supply would be the market town, and it was the carriers' cart which provided the link between town and village or farm. On the other hand, those towns whose hinterlands had been most affected by the

spread of industrialisation occupied 5th, 6th, and 7th positions. Within the hinterlands of Hinckley, Loughborough and Ashby-de-la-Zouch were settlements in which retailing and trading services had developed with the growth in population so that it was to these local shops that the people looked for many of their needs. These local shops may have depended on the market town for their wholesale supplies but this transfer of goods between town and hinterland would not be a function of the country carriers. This would also apply to a large extent to the industrial products of the hinterland. Although it has been suggested that daily carts into the towns perhaps reflected the need for exchange of raw materials and finished products between the factory or warehouse in the town and the outworkers in the villages - as, for example, between Loughborough and the villages to the east of the town - yet this would only be true where local rail connection from the villages was not available or where special conveyances were not provided by the firms concerned. These alternative methods of transport would reduce the dependence of the hinterland on the carriers' carts. Hence there were several reasons why the development of a local transport system should be relatively weaker and less effective in the case of a hinterland partially dependent on industry compared with one wholly dependent on agriculture.

The preceding considerations of the transport facilities to a market town have been based entirely on the

situations prevailing on market days. With the exception of Leicester, transport on the scale discussed above was available on only one day per week. Lutterworth has been shown to have had the most effective transport network within its hinterland. A glance at the diagram for Lutterworth in Fig. 20 will show that except on Thursdays there were almost no public transport facilities into the town - the only exception being the omnibus from Ullesthorpe station. There were, in addition, some carriers' carts moving out of the town to make the journey to other market towns - for example, to Leicester on Wednesdays and Saturdays, to Coventry on Fridays, etc. The situation at the other towns in Leicestershire did not show such an extreme variation in transport facilities between market day and the rest of the week - for instance, to Loughborough, several villages had daily carts and others, carts on several days of the week - but even so it was only around Leicester, with a second market day on Wednesday, that there was any significant development of a transport network for more than one day in the week. It is on an examination of these weekly facilities that the hinterlands of the market towns have been determined.

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE HINTERLANDS OF THE MARKET TOWNS BASED ON THEIR PROVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.

In the introduction to this section specific mention was made of the various administrative functions given to towns at this period, and in the chapter on the urban hierarchy the distribution of these functions in Leicestershire was examined. It was there ascertained that the market towns stood out amongst those selected for these purposes, as each of them was a headquarter town for each of eight services examined whereas no other settlement was chosen for more than five of them.⁽ⁱ⁾

In the mid 19th. century, if government and administration was to be effective then it was necessary to minimise the difficulties of poor, infrequent and slow communications and to make use of whatever local 'areas of circulation' were to be found in the social framework of society. Such a social framework existed in the unity of a market town and its hinterland and that this was recognised is seen in the choice of the market towns as the most important centres of local administration. Hence, in an examination of the areas which they were called upon to serve, it will be possible to glean some additional information vis à vis town-country relations at this period. Of course, not all the administrative divisions took note of the relationships between a market town and its hinterland;

(i) (See above p. 133)

sometimes, for example, non-market towns were selected as centres of administration on an arbitrary basis and, on other occasions, the fact that county boundaries were treated as inviolable when administrative divisions were established led to the divorce of a town from a large part of its hinterland.

However as most divisions were determined to 'suit the convenience of the parties concerned' and because, as Lipman suggests, 'the structure of local government areas is necessarily an essay in the attempt to solve the relationship between administration and geography',⁽ⁱ⁾ it is essential that the administrative areas of the various market towns be closely studied as they will provide information concerning the relationship of these towns with their dependent areas.

In the 20 years before 1850 and in the two decades following, a 'bewildering complex of areas and authorities was built up',⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ to serve as the basis of local government. The development followed on an era when what local administration there had been was in the hands of the magistrates, their districts being the ancient 'hundreds' (See Fig. 23). This system was supplemented by the civil functions of the parishes especially important in the case of the roads and in the relief of the poor.

It was this latter function of the parishes which was the first to be reorganised following on the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. The local structures evolved for the administration of

(i) (Lipman, V.D. Local Government Areas. 1834-45.
Oxford 1949. p.)

(ii) (ibid. p.)

the Act was the work of the Commissioners and the Assistant Commissioners of the Poor Law. The Act itself did not comment on the manner in which the Poor Law Unions were to be formed and gave no specification as to their size or population.

However the Commissioners evolved a systematic division of the country 'which provided an orderly and illuminating contrast to all other local government areas....It was the only time that England and Wales were systematically divided up for local government purposes on a logical plan.'⁽ⁱ⁾ One of the Assistant Commissioners detailed the reasons which lay behind the method of formation of the Unions:

1. The general convenience of the parties concerned.
2. The facilities of communication.
3. The habits and customs of the district as to the place to which the inhabitants most commonly resort in the usual avocations.
4. The population which is spread over any given area.
5. The nature of the population and how far the habits and employment of each portion accord.
6. The extent of pauperism in the district.
7. The existence of any workhouse or other facilities for bringing the new machinery into operation.
8. The consideration of economy in procuring or perfecting the necessary accommodation as to workhouse room, and the remuneration, number and the cost of paid officers.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (ibid. p.43).

(ii) (Report prepared by E.Goulson, Assistant Commissioner of the Poor Law at Newark for the Board of Commissioners in connection with the Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry into the Poor Law Amendment Act. Aug.20th.1837. P.R.O. HO/73/53)

It is significant to note that the three first considerations were local convenience, local communications, and cognizance of local areas of circulation. Little wonder, therefore, that, in a similar report, another Assistant Commissioner could state that;

'Care should be taken at the formation of a Union to select some central spot for the situation of the workhouse in the largest market town of the district',⁽ⁱ⁾

for, in doing so, these first three considerations would be met.

Moreover the manner in which these considerations were made effective is also significant. In giving evidence to the Royal Sanitary Commission of 1870 an Inspector of the Poor Law Auditors said that when the Unions were formed:

'The Poor Law Commissioners sent Assistant Commissioners down into all parts of the country to make enquiry as to the most convenient way of arranging groups of parishes into Unions'.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

He went on to state that the following interested parties were consulted:

'The principal residents, landowners, and magistrates calling them together in a meeting and proposing a plan for a Union, and hearing their objections and suggestions. Then a report was made to the Poor Law Commissioners'.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (Report by W.H.J. Hawley, Assistant Commissioner at Chichester. as above. Sept.9th. 1837)

(ii) (Evidence of J. Lambert Esq. Inspector of the Poor Law Auditors, before the Royal Sanitary Commission 1870. Question No. 4671)

(iii)(ibid. Question No. 4674)

This evidence suggests that the Assistant Commissioners carried out detailed local surveys to secure information concerning the relationship between a town and its service area. It is not difficult to imagine them approaching the local landowners and asking which was the local marketing centre used, and which town were consumer goods and agricultural supplies obtained from. And, on the basis of the replies, presenting a plan for a Union to the local inhabitants and asking for comments, criticisms, and suggestions based on their own more intimate knowledge of local conditions. Artificial boundaries, such as county boundaries were not recognised:

'In many cases county boundaries were ignored in forming poor law unions. In some cases it seemed absolutely necessary to disregard them; for instance, where a town stood upon a river' ⁽ⁱ⁾

Facts such as this were, no doubt, recognised as a result of the local enquiries, when it would be pointed out that a market town standing on a river was patronised by farmers living on both banks of the valley, whether or not they happened to lie within the same county. Taking the results of these local surveys into account the Commissioners, in their ~~report~~ report, commented:

'The most convenient limit of Unions which we have found has been that of a circle, taking a market town as the centre, and comprehending to it those surrounding parishes whose inhabitants are accustomed to resort to the same market.

(i) (Evidence of W. Farr, the Supt. of the Statistical Dept. of the General Registration Office before the Royal Sanitary Commission. Question No. 4454.)

This arrangement was highly convenient for the weekly attendance of the parish officers....Thus while the farmer or the labourer, the guardian or the pauper might think it a disadvantage to have to leave his own parish on poor law business, the disadvantage was brought to a minimum, because he went to the town to which he would normally go for marketing and similar purposes'. (i)

It was probably the enunciation of this general principle which led the late C.B. Fawcett to comment:

'Each important market town became the centre of a poor law union and the parishes linked to that town were those whose farmer inhabitants normally came in to do their business at that market town....I would suggest that if you want country districts which are reasonable natural units, in terms of the organisation of the country, just before the railway age, you will find them to a large extent in the poor law unions.' (ii)

And, indeed, the principle recorded, the considerations detailed, and the comments quoted would lead one to suppose that the hinterlands of the market towns in the mid-nineteenth century might immediately be seen in the areas of the poor law unions. Surely in Leicestershire we shall find the seven

(i) (First Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners. 1835)
(ii) (Fawcett, C.B. In discussion on a paper given by E.W. Gilbert, 'The boundaries of local government areas'. Geographical Journal. Vol.111. 1948. p.172 et.seq.)

market towns each the head of a union, the extent of which delimits the marketing area of that particular town. Such is the theory. Detailed investigations have shown the fallacious nature of this over generalisation. A mere glance at the areas of the Leicestershire unions (Fig. 22) will show that the theory was not always put into practice. It is, then, necessary to recall that there had been other considerations determining the size of Unions, apart from the convenience of those attending the local market towns. Factors such as the size of the locally resident population, the extent of pauperism, the economic activities of the neighbourhood, the available workhouse accommodation, and others had no doubt been taken into consideration when towns other than market towns in Leicestershire had been chosen as poor law union centres; it was considerations of these kinds which led to the Leicester and Hinckley unions being respectively totally or partially unrelated to their marketing areas. Thus it is with reservations that we must look at the evidence for market areas in Leicestershire based on an examination of the unions which were formed.⁽ⁱ⁾

In view of the declared intentions of the commissioners to use the market towns as the centres of their unions, the reasons for the departure from this principle in Leicestershire must be examined. The choice of Billesdon, Blaby, Barrow-on-Soar, and Market Bosworth for union towns would appear to be related directly to the decision that the Leicester union should

(i) (The evidence has been obtained from a study of the papers, reports, and correspondence concerning the individual unions; available for examination in the P.R.O. Ref. M.H.12)

LEICESTERSHIRE: MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

POOR LAW UNIONS 1835-8



PETTY SESSIONAL DIVISIONS 1842



POLLING DISTRICTS 1832



POLLING DISTRICTS 1857

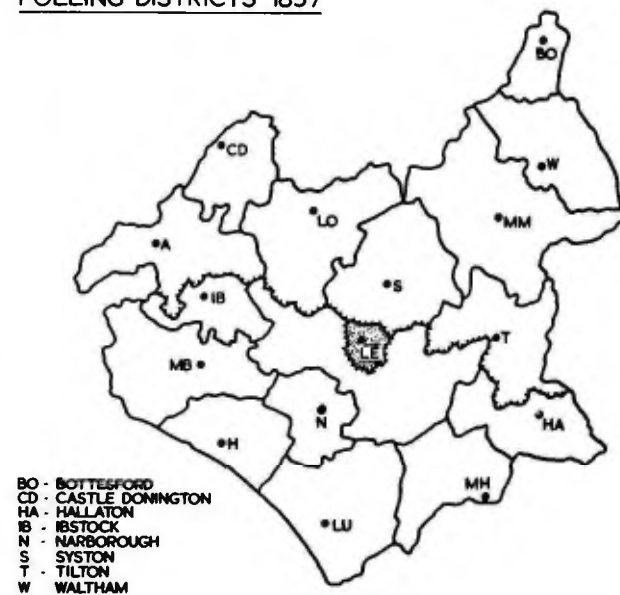


FIG. 22.

only include the area within the borough boundary. In the minutes of evidence given before the Royal Sanitary Commission it was stated that the decision to make a local government unit of this type also the area of a union was 'due to local circumstances'.⁽ⁱ⁾

In the case of Leicester the local circumstances appeared to have been the desire of the 'city fathers' to maintain borough control over all aspects of government; the wishes of the inhabitants of the surrounding rural area not to come under the poor law jurisdiction of Leicester, which, as an expanding industrial city, was particularly prone to serious periodical unemployment which would have the effect of inflating the poor law rate; and thirdly, and probably most important, Leicester's population (38,000 in 1831) was sufficiently large to justify a separate union. These local circumstances, therefore, eliminated any tributary area to the Leicester union and caused complications in the surrounding districts for, as we have seen from the transport studies, the hinterland of Leicester was both extensive and populous. The answer would probably have been to build a 'country' workhouse within the city (as today there is a Leicester district for many county council functions, thus overcoming to some extent the difficulties caused by the division of Leicester city from Leicester county in the primary unit of local government). However this was not done and, therefore, these various centres

(i) (Royal Sanitary Commission. op.cit. Question 4677)

in the county had to be established. It seems that in the case of both Billesdon and Blaby the extent of the unions were first determined and then a search was made for a place at which the workhouse could be built. For instance, as far as the Union in East Leicestershire was concerned the Assistant Commissioner wrote:

'I suggest that this Union takes its name from Billesdon, the most considerable place within it as well as the most central. There is no market town within its bounds but in respect of every other qualification of a centre Billesdon is well entitled to that distinction. It lies on a turnpike road from Leicester to Uppingham, which running east and west divides the union into two nearly equal parts; the roads to it from the adjacent places are most of them good and passable at all seasons.'⁽ⁱ⁾

Thus Billesdon was chosen as the head town of a union, of which by far the largest area fell within the hinterland of Leicester.

One union in the county was formed around a settlement in which workhouse facilities were available as a result of a previous 'Gilbert Incorporation' (these were voluntary incorporations of parishes for relief purposes dating from after 1770). This was the Barrow-on-Soar Union. Barrow had no claim to be a central town. It was merely one of the

(i) (Billesdon Union Correspondence. Report of Ass. Commissioner. March 10th 1836. M.H.12. 6413)

industrial villages of the Soar valley and located only three miles from Loughborough. No doubt the Assistant Commissioner felt it unjustifiable to waste this workhouse and, of course, the inhabitants of the parishes accustomed to look to Barrow for relief purposes might have resented a change. The workhouse represented a capital asset to those who paid poor rates and they would not wish to see it abandoned. Therefore the Barrow union was formed taking in parts of the hinterlands of Leicester and Loughborough.

Having thus examined instances in which the theoretical scheme of the commissioners was disregarded in Leicestershire by the choice of non-market town centres for the Unions, we may now turn to look at those unions which were based on a market town headquarter. In the case of Leicester we have seen that its hinterland was not taken into consideration; in the case of the union at Hinckley this was deliberately restricted in extent to an area within a few miles of the town. The Assistant Commissioner, having pointed out the advantages of Hinckley as a union town, commented:

'A question might arise why I do not recommend a more extensive union, the population being only 13,780 of which so large a proportion is in Hinckley itself. There are several reasons.....the chief is that perhaps there is no other locality in which so large a proportion of the population is liable to be thrown on the poor rate for support....During the depression

as many as 2000 hands have been thrown on the parish in one week in Hinckley alone and a proportionate rate in the neighbouring places. The consequences of bringing so large a population of such a character within the superintendence of one board....might be most serious. Another reason is that there is a prevailing dislike to be connected to Hinckley (except for Burton Hastings). I should have found it most difficult to persuade those whose circumstances did not evidently point out Hinckley as their centre that it would conduce to their best interests to join a neighbour they had so often seen in distress. (i)

This suggests that the union was restricted to the absolutely minimum hinterland of the town and that, had there not been the possibility of such large scale unemployment in the town and its neighbouring villages, thus straining the poor rate and the workhouse accommodation to the limit, its bounds would have been considerably extended especially in a western direction to include parishes united with Market Bosworth. It should, however, be noted that the transport hinterland is only a little more extensive than the union and this suggests that 'the prevailing dislike to be connected to Hinckley' perhaps did not apply only to poor law purposes. Perhaps it had a more general application amongst the rural population of south-west Leicestershire who no longer considered the town an

(i) (Hinckley Union Correspondence. Report of Ass. Commissioner. Not dated: Probably late 1835. M.H. 12. 6443)

attractive marketing place by virtue of the general development of industry. In 1831 44% of the town's males were engaged in manufactures and another 8% as labourers compared with only 27% in the retail trades, handicrafts and the professions. Perhaps, therefore, the extent of the poor law union was the first concrete expression of a decline in the hinterland of Hinckley for marketing purposes consequent upon its new economic activities.

For other market towns in the county, however, the extent of their hinterlands was the basis on which the boundaries of their unions were determined. This feature is most clearly seen in the cases of Melton, Market Harborough, and Lutterworth although it was equally true in the cases of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Loughborough - except on the southern boundaries of their hinterlands where the unions formed around Market Bosworth and Barrow respectively, cut off areas looking to the two market towns for services.

In 1835 some inhabitants of Market Harborough wrote to the Assistant Commissioner of the poor law expressing the belief that 'the parish would be unanimous in wishing Market Harborough to be a central place' and pointing out that 'most of the villages surrounding the town are most anxious that a Union should be formed here which is the market town and general place of business for a considerable district.'⁽ⁱ⁾ Moreover a parish meeting considered 'that a union formed here

(i) (Market Harborough Union Correspondence. M.H.12. 6581. Letter from the Select Vestry. Aug.24th. 1835)

would be beneficial to the town and was desired by most of the villages in the neighbourhood in Leicestershire as well as in Northamptonshire'.⁽ⁱ⁾

These pleas for consideration as the centre of a union were upheld by the Assistant Commissioner who reported:

'In fixing Market Harborough as a centre I have been influenced by local considerations...it is the market town for all the surrounding places....weekly petty sessions are held there at which both Leicestershire and Northamptonshire magistrates attend. There is no town of equal size within miles of it and it is a post town. About half of the union is in Northamptonshire and here I conferred with the commissioner for that county. I found that he had excluded from his unions 17 parishes and places the convenience of which would be best consulted by joining them to Market Harborough; many of them of their own accord had made representations to that effect and all the others had gladly acquiesced in the plan when it had been suggested to them.'⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Here then was a union based on community of interest arising from the unity of a town and its service area. To the south the Northamptonshire parishes were happy to be joined to a Leicestershire town and it may be noted that the transport hinterland of Market Harborough in Northamptonshire was

(i) (ibid. Report of Parish meeting.)

(ii) (ibid. Report by the Assistant Commissioner on the proposed Harborough Union. Nov.7th. 1835)

practically co-terminus with the union area. To the east there was but one note of dissension - from the inhabitants of the parish of Medbourne who made a request to be attached to the Market Harborough union rather than to that of Uppingham. This suggested that they looked rather to the former town for their services. The parish was included in the transport hinterland of Market Harborough. To the west, the union boundary marked the division of the spheres of influence of Market Harborough and Lutterworth, and, to the north, it is possible to assume that the union boundary marked the division between the hinterlands of Leicester and Market Harborough. This boundary was two miles further north than the boundary of the mid-nineteenth century transport hinterlands.

Overall, therefore, the boundary of the union of Market Harborough is important collaborating evidence of the sphere of influence of the town in the period before the railways altered the local lines of communication.

The Melton Union most certainly represented an area with a community of interest. The Assistant Commissioner observed in his report that:

'there is not a single parish in my proposed Union which would desire a connection with any other place than Melton' (i)

The fact that the Commissioner took note of the wishes of the inhabitants is shown by the fact that he allocated rather more places to the union than he at first intended because there

(i) (Melton Mowbray Union Correspondence. Report by the Assistant Commissioner. 5th. March 1836)

was "a general desire to be included in this union."⁽ⁱ⁾

Furthermore, the fact that he took account of the movements of the population from the various villages for marketing purposes is indicated in the description given of the manner in which the southern boundary of the union was determined.

'I have endeavoured to draw this union and the Billesdon union so as to secure to all parishes due facility of communication with their respective centres. From Somerby, Twyford, and Barsby the intercourse is chiefly with Melton; and the roads from these places northwards are better kept than those in a contrary direction; the parishes to the south of these above named will be most conveniently associated with Billesdon.'⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

It is significant that this southern boundary of the union was almost coincident with the southern boundary of the transport hinterland suggesting the latter's importance in determining marketing hinterlands. At this stage, however, it is not proposed to consider the extent of the union in detail as later in the section the 'administrative' hinterland of the town will be analysed and the boundary of this was the same as that of the union.

The formation of the union around Lutterworth was hampered by the existence of two 'Gilbert Incorporations' and the parishes in these made specific requests concerning their future connections. However in spite of this the Assistant Commissioner was able to report:

(i) {ibid.}
(ii) {ibid.}

'The union I now submit would have been precisely the same had I been free to work it up without consulting any partial or local interests whatever.'⁽ⁱ⁾

He had recognised the advantages of Lutterworth as the centre for a union, and thus, we may assume that the area which he would have chosen to attach to it would have consisted of its marketing area. Again the area of the union is coincident (with but two small exceptions) with the calculated administrative hinterland for the town and further discussion on its extent will be deferred until later in the chapter.

The formation of the unions has been treated in such considerable detail because, in the first place, they were the first of the series of local government hinterlands to be established, and, secondly, because they offered, in theory at least, evidence as to the marketing areas of the market towns at the period. As the theory was not always observed in practice it was necessary to sift the information very carefully. This process has shown that it is essential to look at each union, both at the reasons for its formation and at the area which it covered, on an 'ad hoc' basis, in order to establish which union boundaries did coincide with the boundaries of the spheres of influence of the marketing towns, and which did not.

For the remainder of the administrative divisions to be considered, a briefer treatment will be given. These were formed 'on a basis of convenience' but not necessarily the

(i) (Lutterworth Union Correspondence. Report of the Assistant Commissioner. 12th November. 1835)

convenience of those who had to visit the headquarter town, and certainly not necessarily bearing in mind the hinterlands of the market towns and the transport facilities available to them. However this was no doubt one of the considerations.

A further factor must be borne in mind when reviewing the relationship between spheres of influence and administrative areas: thus, although when formed, a given administrative area may not necessarily be entirely related to the hinterland of a town, yet the connection that is thus created may eventually influence the orientation of town-country relationships to some extent. Thus a village linked with a previously 'alien' town in a new petty sessional division will develop contacts by virtue of the interchange of people which must take place. Attendance in the town for legal purposes may bring about other connections and perhaps even encourage the development of public transport facilities etc. Such a development, of course, will only occur in cases where the centre for the petty sessions already has other types of facilities available, and is not meant to suggest that the selection of an unimportant village as the centre of a petty sessional court (as at East Norton in Leicestershire - see Fig. 22) will thereby ensure the eventual development of that place as an important central settlement.

Bearing these factors in mind the district arrangements of five other services are to be examined.

Up to 1842 the boundaries of the Petty Session Divisions

were coincident with those of the 'Hundreds' - districts within the county dating to the 10th century (Fig.23). In 1842, however, changes in the boundaries were ordered by the Quarter Sessions of the Justices of the Peace because "the ancient divisions and limits of the hundreds....had become uncertain in some instances and in many, inconvenient to the inhabitants, from the change or increase of population or from other causes".⁽ⁱ⁾ The recommendations for the new local sessions, "having made enquiry and examination into the boundary lines, extent and other local circumstances"⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ divided the county into eight districts "each having for its centre some principal town or place of convenient resort."⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

These divisions are shown in the second diagram on Fig. 22. The market towns were selected as the headquarters of the petty sessions^{but} with two additions. Market Bosworth was made an alternative centre to Hinckley, the sessions being held alternate weeks in each place. East Norton was selected as the centre of an East Leicestershire division. It had a population of only 150 and the main reason for its selection was that the Rutlandshire towns of Oakham and Uppingham, which provided marketing facilities for this area of the county could, of course, not be used as petty session centres for areas of Leicestershire.

The divisions were absolutely dependent on the county

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- (i) (Order book of the Quarter Sessions. Michaelmas Sessions. October 15th. 1849. Report of a Select Committee to consider Police Divisions in the County of Leicester.)
 - (ii) (ibid. Report to Special Sessions. 4th January 1841.)
 - (iii) (ibid. Michaelmas Sessions 1849)

boundary and hence several of the centres could not include much more than half of those areas to which they were 'the places of convenient resort'. At Market Harborough the problem was solved by holding in the town the sessions for the adjacent district of Northamptonshire, as well as those for the area of Leicestershire delimited on the diagram.

The Petty Session divisions were accepted as the unit of administration for other county services. In 1859 the Police Divisions were made coincident with them; in 1857 they also became the districts for the Inspectors and Weights and Measures; and in 1862 the county highway districts were formed with the same boundaries.⁽ⁱ⁾

In 1862, after 20 years experience of the divisions, there were two significant boundary changes. These are shown in Fig. 22. Three parishes were changed from the Lutterworth to the Hinckley Division after consideration of a memorial from the inhabitants of the villages who pleaded:

'The present arrangement is inconvenient....Hinckley is the market town for the three parishes and the market of which is invariably attended by your memorialists, and in which from their relative communication and easy distance from it, your memorialists are most interested. It is rarely, if ever, that any of your memorialists attend the market at Lutterworth.'⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The new boundary was coincident with the boundary of the poor

(i) (ibid. Michaelmas Sessions. 1849. et seq.)
 (ii) (ibid. Epiphany Sessions. 5th January 1863)

law union, and forms concrete evidence as to the extent of the hinterlands of the two market towns at this period.

Changes had also taken place in the north-east of the county. This area had originally been placed in the Melton district even though the town was up to 10 miles distant. Between 1860 and 1863 the 15 northernmost parishes were transferred to a new division of Belvoir. The result was to separate from Melton those places which did not look to the town for marketing facilities and, as they were unable to be united with their market town - viz. Grantham - which lay in Lincolnshire, it was necessary to base the new division on Belvoir - a hamlet of only 200 inhabitants. However, many of the administrative functions were later transferred to the settlement of Bottesford which, as we saw in an earlier chapter, was a sub-centre of some importance in this part of the county.⁽ⁱ⁾

Following on the parliamentary reform act of 1832, the Quarter Sessions were given the task of 'dividing their Parliamentary divisions into convenient districts for polling'.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ The constituencies themselves, laid down in the Act, created difficulties in any attempt to secure areas of local convenience for polling, for their boundaries coincided with those of the counties and the hundreds (see Fig.23). However six of the market towns were selected as polling stations - viz: Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Loughborough, and Melton Mowbray for the

(i) (ibid. Epiphany Sessions. 1859. et.seq.)
(ii) (ibid. Michaelmas Sessions. 1832).

northern division; and Hinckley, Leicester and Market Harborough for the southern division. Where possible, it is evident that the polling district attached to each market town was related to the town's service area, as, for example, between Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Loughborough, and Loughborough and Melton in the northern division, and between Leicester and Hinckley, and Leicester and Market Harborough in the south.

With increasing population and the extension of the franchise it was found that additional polling places were required. In 1857, therefore, the divisions shown in the fourth diagram of Fig, 22 were established, on the recommendations of the petty sessions magistrates. These new divisions were based on all the market towns and on many of the subsidiary centres, as noted in the survey of 1851, for example, Hallaton, Market Bosworth, Castle Donington, Bottesford, etc.⁽ⁱ⁾

At the same time, however, the areas of 1832 remained as the court districts for the revision of voters' lists.

The post-towns and their districts are shown on the first diagram on Fig. 23. By 1849, the date of the information plotted, the penny post had been in successful operation for seven years, and we may, therefore, assume that the connections between a post-town and its district were steadily increasing in importance. This would imply good communications within the district, and if these were available for post office purposes then they could also be used to cement other contacts between the town and the settlements in the area.

(i) (ibid. Easter Sessions, April 1857 and Special Sessions, August 1857)

LEICESTERSHIRE: MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

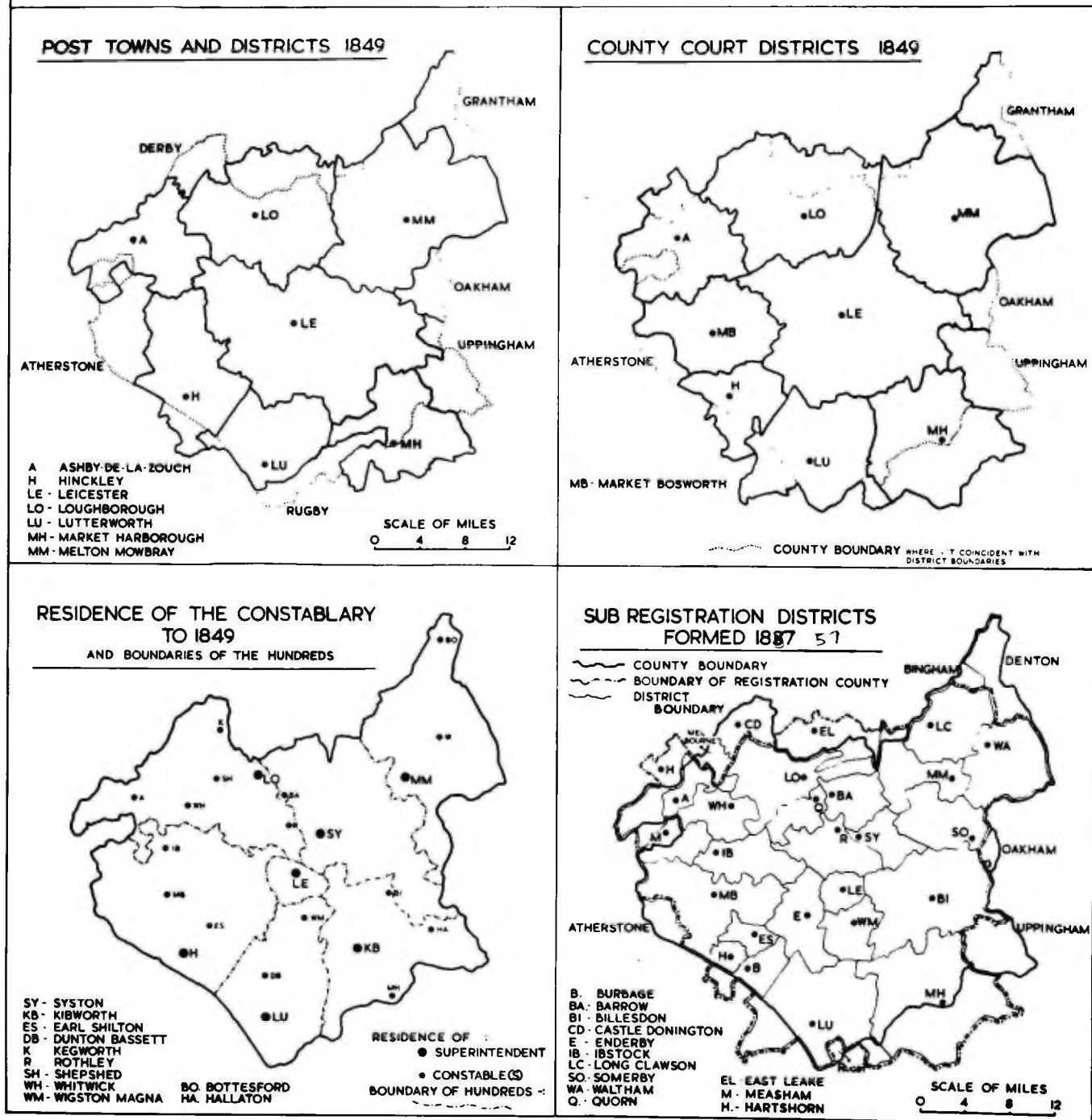


FIG. 23.

By 1849 the railways were being utilised for the primary distribution of mail and this, in Leicestershire, is reflected in the areas of the county that were served from Rugby and Atherstone, both located on the Trent valley line from London. Leicester, Melton Mowbray, and Loughborough also had rail communication by this date and this is reflected in the wide areas which they continued to serve. Lutterworth and Market Harborough had lost some of their earlier postal districts by reason of the extension of Rugby's district along the southern edge of the county. (the fourth diagram on Fig.23) Hinckley served an extensive area to the north of the town, but there was a sub-office at Market Bosworth from which the local deliveries were made. The postal hinterland of Ashby-de-la-Zouch was restricted to the south by the facilities offered by Atherstone, and to the north west, in the area of Derbyshire which it served for other purposes, by the postal facilities of Burton-on-Trent, located on the Derby and Birmingham railway, opened in 1839.

Grantham, Oakham, and Uppingham, again served the eastern fringes of the county and Derby, through a sub-office at Kegworth station, the north-west corner of Leicestershire.

Information detailing the considerations on which the extent of the county court districts were determined has not been found. However, the evidence on the map (diagram 2 on figure 23) would suggest that the convenience of the inhabitants of the various parishes, and their practice with reference to

visiting towns for other purposes, were the predominant criteria. This is evidenced by the fact that the county court districts of Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Lutterworth, and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, were coincident with the poor law unions around the same towns; and these were the unions in the county which were found to be based on marketing hinterlands.

In the cases of the other unions in the county, we saw how other factors had prevented their formation coincident with the marketing areas of the central towns. For the remaining county court districts these considerations did not arise and it would appear that the courts' districts around Leicester, Loughborough, and Hinckley might perhaps be equated with the normal habits of the population in visiting these towns. Cognizance would appear not to have been taken of the county boundaries, as no fewer than six of the eight Leicestershire districts include 'foreign' parishes and, on the other hand, Grantham, Oakham, Uppingham and Atherstone each provided this facility to the areas of Leicestershire in which their influence was felt.

Only in the western part of the county was the situation a little complicated. This was due to the inclusion of Market Bosworth as a county court town. In this case too, the distance apart of the four surrounding market towns of Leicester, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Hinckley and Atherstone must have been the cause of the decision to have a separate county court district in this part of the county. The Market Bosworth district for

county court purposes was, however, more limited than the poor law union, especially on the Leicester and Hinckley sides. The fact that the settlement was made a district centre again indicates that in this area the influence of the market towns was not particularly strong. This will be further considered in a later chapter.

We have now discussed six administrative, legal and other similar services provided to a hinterland, of greater or lesser extent, primarily by the towns which we have designated as the market centres; and whose hinterlands based on transport facilities have already been determined. From a synthesis of the information as to the extent of the areas served by the market towns for each of the six services, it will be possible to obtain a composite picture of administrative provision at each place in the county at this period. The provision of each of these services by a given centre to its surrounding district implied visits to the town either frequent or occasional. It may have been weekly, as in the case of the guardians' visit to the board meeting at the workhouse; or it may have been much less frequent, as in the case of visiting a polling place in order to record one's vote; or it may have been irregular, as in the case of attending the county court or the petty sessions. The reasons for, and the occasions of the visits were variable; some of the administrative functions of a town were very much more important than others; but all would contribute, to a greater

or lesser extent, in building up a tradition of town-country relationships, in helping to establish the hinterland of a town, and in intensifying the degree of exchange between the town and the tributary area. Bearing these factors in mind, and working on the evidence of administrative divisions already described, a pattern of hinterlands of the Leicestershire market towns, based on their provision of administrative services have^s been calculated. The results are shown in Fig.24.

The method of construction has been as follows; for each parish and township was determined the centre providing each one of the six services; the hinterlands of the seven market towns have then been constructed by uniting with the centre those places which depended on it for at least three of the services; however, for those parishes in other counties, a centre could only provide three of the six services - viz: poor law unions, county courts, postal facilities - for the other three were services for which the county boundary was a fixed limit, and hence where a 'foreign' parish depended on a Leicester centre for two services then it has been included in that town's hinterland. Within each hinterland the boundaries of the parishes are shown and in each parish the number of the services provided by the centre is recorded.

Some peripheral areas of the county have been left 'white'. These cover those parishes which were dependent on a Leicestershire centre for less than three services but looked

MID 19TH CENTURY HINTERLANDS OF LEICESTERSHIRE CENTRES BASED ON THE PROVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

A ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH
H - HINCKLEY
LE - LEICESTER
LO - LOUGHBOROUGH
LU LUTTERWORTH
MH - MARKET HARBOROUGH
MM MELTON MOWBRAY

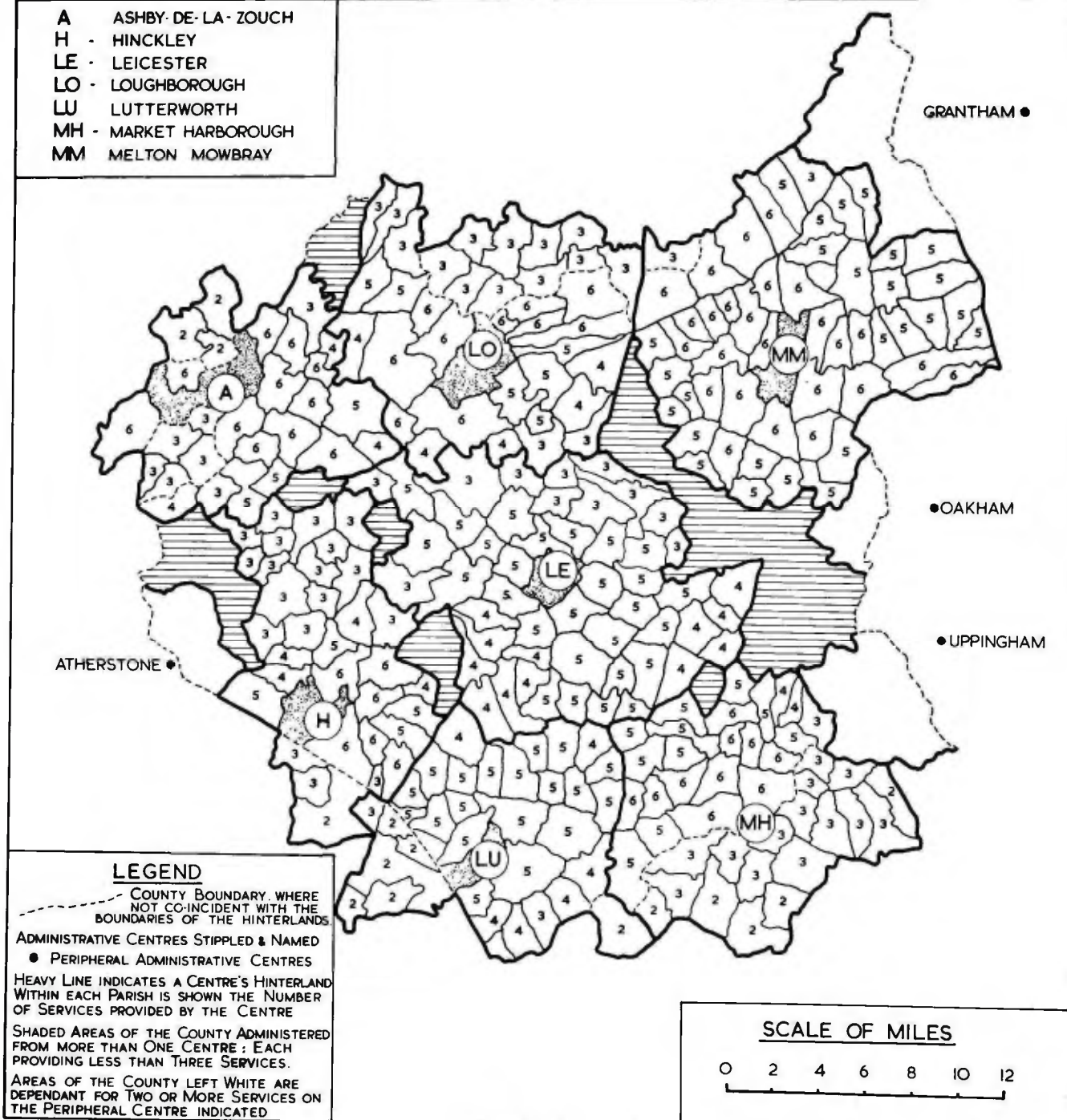


FIG. 24.

to the peripheral town indicated for at least two services.

The 'shaded' areas of the county depended on more than one centre, each providing only one or two of the services.

One of the most significant features of the diagram is that it shows the hinterlands of the smaller market towns each to have been roughly equivalent in area to that of Leicester. The hinterland boundary falls at about the midway point between Leicester and one of the smaller towns. Similarly between the smaller towns themselves the hinterland boundary is located midway between the centres; as, for example, between Market Harborough and Lutterworth, Lutterworth and Hinckley, Ashby and Loughborough, etc.

The only major exception to this pattern is in the western part of the county where the hinterlands of Hinckley, Leicester and Ashby-de-la-Zouch join together. First of all, Leicester's hinterland stretched 10 miles in the direction of Ashby compared with only 7 or 8 miles in the direction of the other towns. This, however, would appear to have been related directly to the increased distance between the two towns - i.e. 17 miles - for the hinterland of Ashby was not restricted in extent on its Leicester side. It stretched a similar distance towards Leicester as did the hinterlands of the other smaller market towns.

Secondly, Hinckley's hinterland covered ten of the 15 miles towards Ashby. However, it should be noted that in the northern part of the hinterland - at distances more than 5

miles from the town - the parishes only looked to Hinckley for three services. For much of this area Market Bosworth provided the other three services, and two of the three for the remainder of the district. This clearly brings out the importance of Bosworth as a subsidiary centre. Those in charge of local government administration evidently thought that by the middle of the 19th century transport had not improved to sufficient an extent as to dispense with the services of Bosworth as a central settlement for the provision of certain aspects of administration. However, this situation as far as administration was concerned is a pointer to the failure of any one of the peripheral market towns to consolidate its influence in this area of Leicestershire for ordinary marketing purposes, by this period.

Within each hinterland there were significant variations in the number and percentage of settlements to which the centre provided the maximum number of services. In the hinterland of Melton Mowbray all six services are provided to about one-half of the settlements concerned, and five out of the six to all the remainder in Leicestershire with but one exception. The one Nottinghamshire parish in the hinterland - viz: Upper Broughton - looked to Melton for all of the three services which ignored the county boundary. Hence within this hinterland the evidence of administrative services would suggest close relations between the town and the rural settlements. This confirms the belief set forth by the Assistant Commissioner of the Poor Law.

'I believe there is not a parish in my proposed Union (the boundaries of this were coincident with the boundaries of the determined 'administrative' hinterland) which would desire a connection with any other place than Melton.'⁽ⁱ⁾

In the hinterland of Market Harborough only nine parishes were dependent on the town for all six services. Of the remainder in Leicestershire, however, five services were supplied to all except several in the extreme east, where a couple of the services were provided locally at Hallaton and East Norton. 13 Northamptonshire parishes looked to Market Harborough for all three possible services and a further 5 settlements for 2 of the three. This indicates clearly the strength of the town's influence 'over the border' especially when it is remembered that the Northamptonshire petty sessional court covering these parishes held its meetings in Market Harborough.

Lutterworth did not fulfil the function of a court town for the revision of voters lists, and hence can provide but a maximum of five services to the surrounding parishes. These, however, were supplied to most of the parishes in the hinterland. Along the southern edge of the hinterland Lutterworth's influence was less strong, as, for this area, Rugby was the post town. Welford, however, over the border in Northamptonshire, looked to Lutterworth for two of three services. This also applied to five parishes in Warwickshire. The very definite

(i) (Union of Melton Mowbray; Report by the Ass. Commissioner. 5th March. 1836. M.H. 12. 6609)

character of the northern edge of the hinterland is significant. Both Leicester and Lutterworth were centres for only five of the services but, on either side of the hinterland boundary, each centre respectively provided this maximum number or only one less than the maximum.

Only a small part of the hinterland of Hinckley was dependent on the town for six or even five services. The importance of Market Bosworth in the northern part of the hinterland has already been stressed. In Warwickshire, 3 parishes were served - the largest of these, Wolvey, only looked to Hinckley for two of the three services because the inhabitants did not wish to be joined in the Hinckley poor law union. Ashby's hinterland included 19 parishes in Leicestershire, and 8 in Derbyshire. Of the former, 11 depended on Ashby for all six of the services, and three others for five of them. To north and south were parishes only looking to Ashby for three of the six services, the others being provided either by other market towns or by subsidiary settlements. In the enclave of Derbyshire to the south of Ashby all three services were provided, and north of the town, the Derbyshire parishes depended on Ashby for two services.

Loughborough served 24 parishes in Leicestershire and 10 in Nottinghamshire. The strength of its influence in the ten parishes of the latter county is shown in the fact that all of them looked to Loughborough for all the three services. In Leicestershire the parishes due east from the town - viz:

Wymeswold, Burton on the Wolds, etc. - and some to the west and the south-west, including the populous parish of Shepshed, and the Charnwood Forest parishes of Charley and Woodhouse, are dependent on Loughborough for all six services. To the south-east and the north-west of the town, however, the situation is rather more complicated. To the S.E., the settlements looked to Barrow for poor law union purposes and those on the fringe of the hinterland look also to Leicester for two services. To the N.W., Castle Donington provided two services to certain of the settlements, and Ashby and Derby also had some influence in the area.

Leicester, as previously mentioned, was the centre for only five of the services as its poor law union was merely coincident with the municipal boundary. However, over much of the area of its hinterland all five services were received from the city. Towards the south-east, the number fell to four where the parishes looked to East Norton for their petty sessions. In the south-west, too, there were several parishes looking to Leicester for only four services as a result of the establishment of a polling place at Narborough. And along the northern boundary only three services were derived from Leicester. Here Melton, Loughborough, and the subsidiary centre of Syston were responsible for the other services.

Provision of administrative services in certain areas of the county showed an indeterminate situation between the spheres

of influence of two or more centres. We have examined this type of situation in west Leicestershire, in the Market Bosworth district. There, however, the administrative services were largely divided between one of the market towns and a subsidiary centre. Elsewhere no one subsidiary centre has developed to the same extent, and thus, most services are supplied by two of the main centres. A large area of East Leicestershire lay between the hinterlands of Leicester, Melton, Oakham and Uppingham. In the south east part of this area, six centres each supplied one service. The settlements were in the postal district of Uppingham or Oakham; in the county court district of Leicester; in the poor law union of Billesdon; in the petty sessional division of East Norton; in the polling district of Tilton; and in the district of the Melton court for the revision of voters' lists. Here is seen an example 'par excellence' of the situation arising when non-market-town settlements were selected on an 'ad hoc' basis as the centres for important aspects of local government; or when an artificial boundary was allowed to separate places from the towns with which they had the closest functional connections.

Further to the north in this area, where the county boundary had no significance, Melton and Leicester were both of influence, for the former town provided two of the services and the latter town one or, in some cases, two. However, the choice of Barrow and Billesdon as union towns; of East Norton as a petty sessions centre; and Syston and Tilton as polling

places again served to obscure the situation.

The other smaller 'shaded' areas of the county were in much the same situations. For example, in the extreme north-west, Castle Donington and Isley Walton received four services from peripheral centres of Loughborough, Ashby, and Derby, the remaining two being based on Castle Donington itself, functioning, in this instance, as well as in the provision of marketing facilities, as a subsidiary centre marginal to the hinterlands of the surrounding market towns.

In the south-west, there was an area marginal to the hinterlands of Hinckley, Atherstone, and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. None of the services, however, were provided by the last named place and only two by Hinckley. Atherstone supplied one of the services but as the county intervened it would seem that the influence of Atherstone was artificially restricted in this area. By reason of this, the subsidiary centre of Bosworth was called upon to fill the gap, supplying 3 services.

This detailed analysis has shown to what extent there was a division of service functions in these marginal areas. Such a division must have been inconvenient to the inhabitants of the places involved, and although it sometimes represented a truly marginal area lying between the main spheres of influence of two centres, on other occasions it has been shown to be connected with the fact that artificial boundaries such as the county boundaries were far too rigidly observed. This problem was to become more acute later in the nineteenth century and in

the 20th century, after the counties had been selected as the primary units of local administration.

Thus hinterlands based on the provision of administrative services, and those based on the provision of transport services have now been determined for the market centres in the mid-nineteenth century. A comparison of the two types of hinterlands will shed new light on town-country relations at this period.

CHAPTER FIVE.

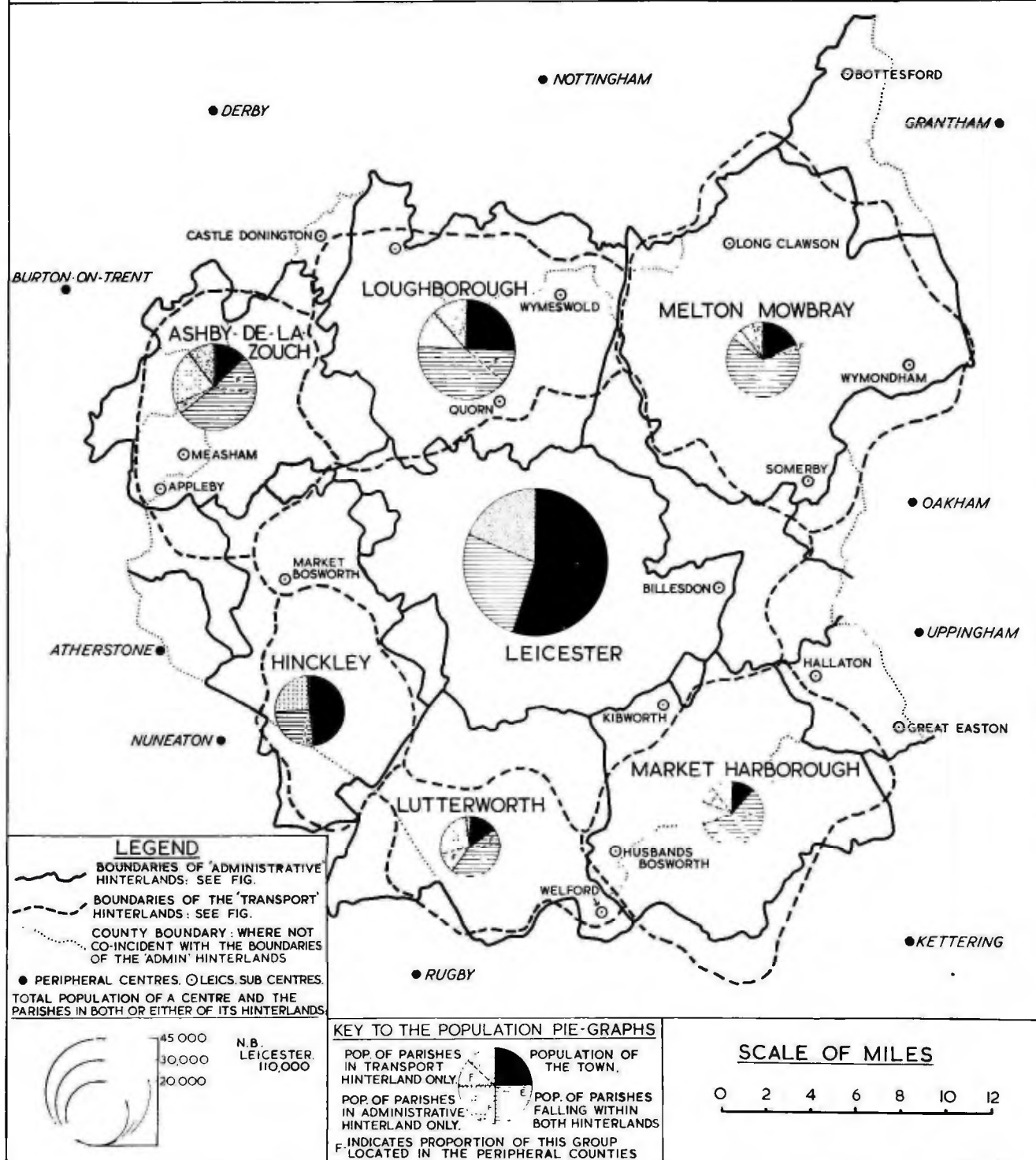
THE URBAN SPHERES OF INFLUENCE IN THE MID 19TH CENTURY.

The major contrast between hinterlands determined from a study of the transport facilities, and those from a study of the provision of administrative services is seen in the very much more extensive transport hinterland of the city of Leicester. Only to the north-west of the city do the boundaries of Leicester's two hinterlands coincide (see Fig. 25) and, as will be seen from the diagram, it was in that direction that the administrative hinterland was the most extensive. In all other directions the boundary of the transport hinterland is at least two miles further out from the city, and to east and west, in particular, it is considerably further than this. For example, in the direction of Market Bosworth the administrative hinterland is 8 miles from the city whereas the transport hinterland reaches a maximum distance of 13 miles from Leicester. Beyond Billesdon the two distances are 10 miles and 14 miles respectively.

The comparison between the populations of the two hinterlands is seen in table 11. ²¹¹ The total population of the parishes in the administrative hinterland was 29,000. All these parishes also lay within the transport hinterland and, in addition, this included another 51 settlements with a population of over 21,000 - an increase of over 75%.

From Fig. 25 it is seen that almost all those settlements to which both Leicester and one of the peripheral market towns

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE OF LEICESTERSHIRE MARKET TOWNS IN THE MID 19TH CENTURY



provided a certain number of administrative services and which, therefore, could not be placed in the administrative hinterland of the one centre or the other, are included in the transport hinterland of Leicester. The only exceptions are certain parishes in the extreme east of the county which fell into the transport hinterlands of one of the two Rutland towns of Uppingham or Oakham. Thus for these areas we may assume that the influence of Leicester was stronger than the influence of one of the smaller market towns.

However new transitional areas have now appeared; areas in which the smaller market towns provided the bulk of the administrative services (and hence were included in the hinterlands of these towns), and yet areas from which the transport facilities to Leicester are superior to those to any other place (and which were, therefore, included in the transport hinterland of Leicester). These areas are shown in Fig. 26.

Areas between Leicester and each of the smaller market towns, with the exception of Ashby de la Zouch, were affected. In some cases the numbers of settlements concerned was small. Between Leicester and Melton, for example, only the small villages of Barsby and Ashby Folville were included in the transition area. From Barsby (the settlement nearer to Leicester) the Assistant Commissioner of the Poor Law had said, 'the intercourse is chiefly with Melton,'⁽ⁱ⁾ but, on the other

(i) Union of Melton Mowbray. Report of the Assistant Commissioner. 5th March 1836.)

DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICE FACILITIES IN THE SETTLEMENTS OF LEICESTERSHIRE. 1851. **SHOWING ALSO THE HINTERLANDS OF THE MARKET TOWNS.**

LEICESTERSHIRE MARKET TOWNS:

AS - ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH	LO - LOUGHBOROUGH
HI - HINCKLEY	LU - LUTTERWORTH
LE - LEICESTER	MM - MELTON MOWBRAY
MH - MARKET HARBOROUGH.	

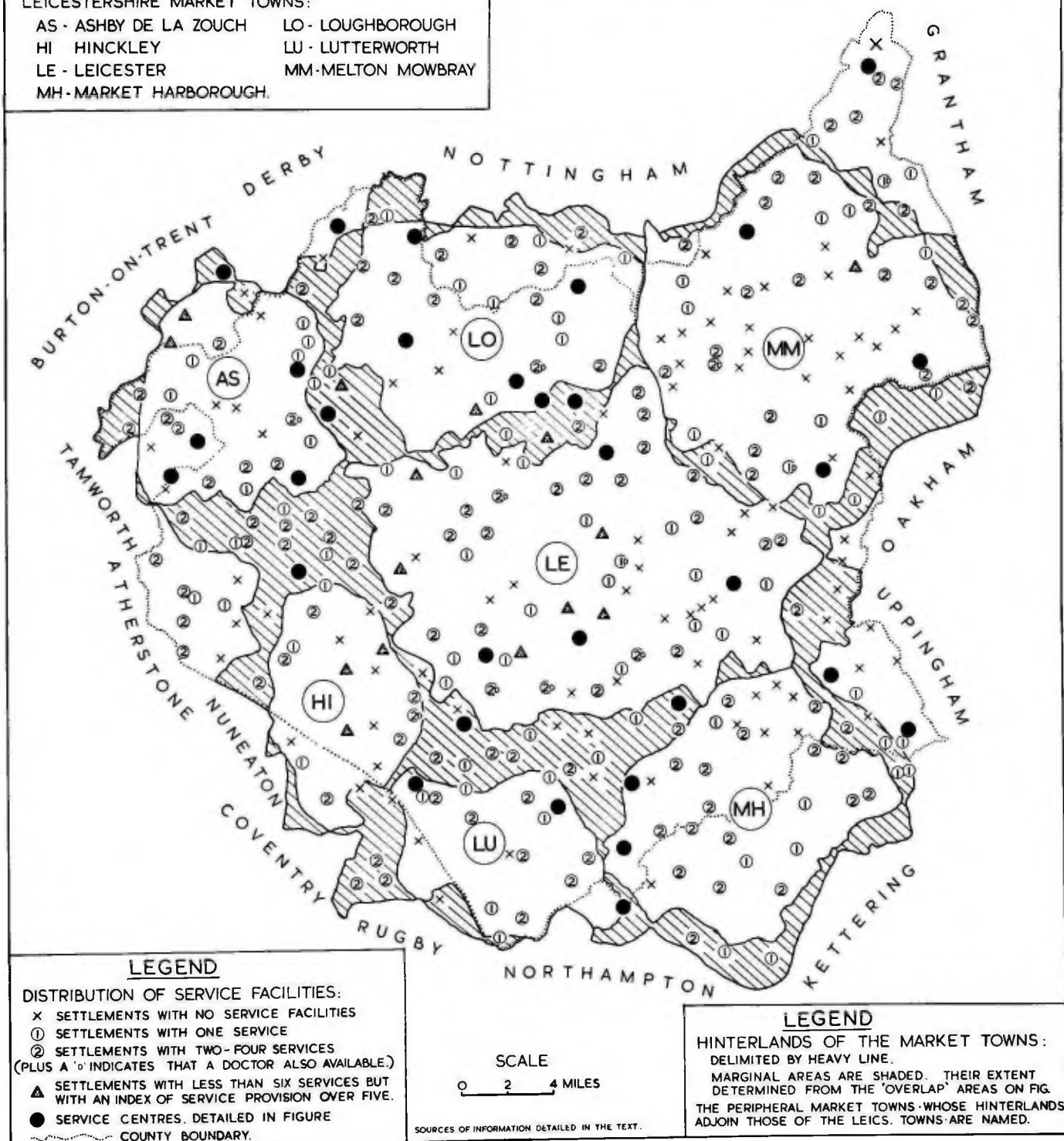


FIG. 26.

hand, the transport facilities to Leicester were rather better as there were three market day carts available compared with only one to Melton Mowbray. Melton, however, was several miles nearer than Leicester, 5 miles compared with nine, and it is necessary to assume that the two settlements looked to both towns for services.

Between Leicester and Loughborough only four settlements were affected but they had a total population of over 3,000 and thus were of some importance. The southernmost place, Cossington, had no transport facilities to Loughborough and hence its connections must primarily have been with Leicester, in spite of the fact that the other town provided the settlement with three administrative services. The other places, however, Sileby, Rothley and Swithland had weekly communication to Loughborough, though not so good as that to Leicester, and thus these places, as in the case of Barsby, would appear to have had divided allegiance between the two centres.

There was only a small area between Leicester and Market Harborough not falling in the sphere of influence of either town but it included the important subsidiary centre of Kibworth, with an index of Service provision of 19.0, and an index of concentration of service facilities of 15.9.⁽ⁱ⁾ Kibworth had a population of 1752. Also included in this area were the two settlements of Saddington and Fleckney with a combined population of almost 800. These latter two places, unlike Kibworth, did not have any transport facilities available to

(i) (see above p.121)

Market Harborough and thus it would seem likely that their main connections were with Leicester, although Market Harborough did provide 5 out of the six administrative services. In the case of Kibworth there was probably movement in both directions.

In other cases there were much more extensive areas which lay between the hinterlands of Leicester and a peripheral market town. This is clearly seen between Leicester and Lutterworth, as the area in the marginal situation actually involved about one third of Lutterworth's administrative hinterland. Eleven settlements were included with a total population of 4,500. To nine of these settlements Lutterworth supplied all the five administrative services for which the town was a centre, and to the remaining two - viz: Broughton Astley and Arnesby - provided four out of the five. Thus the administrative functions of the town in this area were not at all weak. Carriers' carts to Lutterworth passed through five of the settlements and reached to within a few hundred yards of all the remainder, with the exception of Arnesby. As for relative distance, all were nearer to Lutterworth, again with the exception of Arnesby, and also in the case of Broughton Astley, which was equidistant from the two towns. Apart, therefore, from these last two named settlements, which probably looked to Leicester for the majority of the services required and probably regarded the visit to Lutterworth for certain administrative services as a necessary evil, these settlements would appear to have had interests in both Leicester and in Lutterworth. The growth of more intensive transport services to Leicester, from an

area which had previously been in the hinterland of Lutterworth (see Fig. 12), would appear to foreshadow the later increase in the influence of Leicester at the expense of the smaller settlements.

On the direct route between Leicester and Hinckley, the two hinterlands are practically co-termin^{us} but, further north there was a large area included in the transport hinterland of Leicester and the administrative hinterland of Hinckley. There were 10 additional parishes in the transport hinterland of Leicester and they had a total population of about 3,000. From only one of these villages - viz: Bagworth, in the extreme north-east of Hinckley's administrative hinterland - was there no direct communication to Hinckley, in addition to that available to Leicester. The transport links with Hinckley, were, however, weak usually consisting of but one market day carriers' cart compared with the choice of several to Leicester. These facts, therefore, suggest that the inhabitants of these places looked to both Leicester and to Hinckley for marketing facilities etc. except, of course, from Bagworth and the other most northerly parishes in the area, where the distance to Leicester was barely as great as that to Hinckley, and thus the former town with its superior attractions, and the better transport facilities available to it, would have had much more influence than any other centre. Further south, however, the much shorter distance to Hinckley - viz: about 6 miles compared with about 10 to 12 to Leicester - would have had the effect of

increasing the former town's influence and of diminishing that of the latter.

The general feature of Leicester's more extensive hinterland, based on the study of the transport facilities, would seem to indicate that, in several instances, the factor which was pointed out in connection with the relationships with the hinterlands of Lutterworth; viz. that the larger centre, with its more varied attractions, even in the middle of the nineteenth century - for example, its bigger market for the foodstuffs of the countryside, its greater choice of suppliers and other traders, etc., - was attracting custom from the peripheries of the market areas of the smaller market towns; and that the improved transport facilities available to Leicester were a reflection of the demand for such services from the inhabitants of these particular areas. No licence was needed by a carrier to operate on a particular route to this, or to that, centre and hence we may assume that the routes and the services which were operated were those for which a demand existed, and on which the carrier could ensure a profitable journey. Two carriers from Bruntingthorpe to Leicester compared with one carrier from Bruntingthorpe to Lutterworth would suggest that the inhabitants of the settlement were looking rather to the former town than to the latter one for the majority of services. It is impossible to suggest a more precise analysis of the situation than that.

Boundary differences in the transport and administrative hinterlands between the smaller market towns themselves were of

minor significance. The coincidence of the boundaries is in some instances not without significance. Between Melton Mowbray and Loughborough both boundaries followed the line of the ancient Fosse Way. This was located almost exactly midway between the two centres. It was the boundary of the two hinterlands in 1800 and it remains a definite line of demarcation between the influence of the two centres even through to the present day. A glance at Fig. 5 showing the physical background of the county will show that the road and the boundary are located on the highest ground between the two centres. In either direction there is a gentle slope away to the valleys of the Wreak and the Soar respectively. The Fosse Way is also devoid of nucleated settlement; to the west the nearest villages are those of Burton and Walton-on-the-Wolds; and to the east, apart from the two small settlements of Ragdale ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the road), with only 100 inhabitants, and Shoby ($2\frac{1}{4}$ miles) with less than 30 inhabitants, the nearest settlements of Saxelby, Grimstone, and Asfordby are more than three miles distant. Here we have an example, 'par excellence', of the boundaries of the functional hinterlands of towns coinciding with a physical divide, and with an area of a low density of population. It should also be noted, and as is brought out in Fig. 26, that the hinterland of Leicester showed a northern extension along the line of the Fosse Way where the influence of the two smaller towns was at its weakest.

Similar features can also be seen in the case of the

hinterland boundaries to the south of Leicester, between the smaller market towns of Lutterworth and Market Harborough. Here the boundary of the hinterlands of the two last named towns ~~were~~ located on the line of the turnpike road joining Leicester, Welford, and Northampton - an important routeway since early medieval times⁽ⁱ⁾ - and which also followed the highest land separating the two settlements (Fig. 5): and again Leicester's hinterland extends outwards along the line of the road.

To return, however, to the differences in the extent of the hinterlands of the smaller market towns. It was the hinterlands of the town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch which showed the greatest discrepancy from each other; on the Loughborough side the parishes of Bardon, Whitwick, Thringstone, Osgathorpe, and part of Hugglescote, with a total population of some 5,000 people (the area included much of the rapidly expanding coal mining district later to become centralised around Coalville). In this area the transport links with Loughborough were stronger than those with Ashby-de-la-Zouch.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ However Ashby was the administrative centre for all six services, for all the parishes in this group with only one exception. Loughborough had, therefore, no influence administratively and after the opening of the railway to Ashby it seems that ties with that town probably become stronger than those with Loughborough. However railway communication was also available to Leicester

(i) (Russell P. A Leicestershire Road. Leicester 1934.p.12).
(ii) (see above p.155)

and the influence of this centre may have been of importance. The rise of Coalville as a central settlement, to be described in the following two sections, brought some semblance of local unity to an area previously divided amongst the spheres of influence of the three towns around the periphery.

To the west of Ashby, the parish of Seal with a population of 1330 was not in the transport hinterland of the town - there were no transport facilities available according to the several sources of information used - but, on the other hand, the settlement looked to the town for all six administrative services. It should also be pointed out that transport facilities were available to the peripheral market towns of Tamworth and Burton-on-Trent, both of which were located at a greater distance from the parish than was Ashby. In this case the selection of Ashby as the administrative centre for the parish may have led to the development of other contacts with the town, as, later in the century, - as revealed in directories of 1877 and 1900 - transport facilities did become available.

To the south of Ashby-de-la-Zouch the transport hinterland of the town did exceed the administrative hinterland in extent. The parish of Ibstock with 1188 inhabitants received its administrative services from a variety of centres (see Fig.24) but it was in the transport hinterland of Ashby, as also were several other places on the way to Atherstone and Hinckley.

In other parts of the county we may note some of the

other more significant differences in the boundaries of the two types of hinterlands. In the south-west there are 9 places within the hinterland of Atherstone. The transport hinterland extends further east and north to include some additional places and this would appear to reflect more accurately the extent of the influence of the town in Leicestershire as, of course, the administrative hinterland of the town was restricted by the centre being located in another county.

A similar situation, though in reverse, would apply to the extension of Melton Mowbray's transport hinterland to include an area of Rutlandshire. Three places in Rutland had better transport facilities to Melton than to the county town of Oakham.

The transport hinterland of Market Harborough was more extensive than the town's administrative hinterland in two directions. To the East, the parish of Medbourne, with the two hamlets of Drayton and Nevill Holt, had stronger transport links with Market Harborough than with Uppingham, with which town they were joined for administrative purposes. In 1835, the inhabitants of Medbourne had petitioned the Assistant Commissioner of the poor law to be included in Market Harborough's union and not that of Uppingham, thus suggesting that the main ties were with the Leicestershire town.⁽ⁱ⁾ By 1850 these ties were even stronger, after the opening of the Market Harborough and Stamford railway which, with a station at

(i) (See above p. 180.)

Medbourne, made transport into Harborough very much easier.

To the south, in Northamptonshire, the town's transport hinterland contained four more settlements than its administrative hinterland. These parishes were not included in any of the administrative areas, based on Market Harborough, which ignored the county boundary but they did form a part of the petty sessional division of Northamptonshire whose bench met in the Leicestershire town. As well as their transport facilities into Market Harborough they also had transport available to Northampton - at a distance of 10 miles compared with the 8 miles to Market Harborough - and thus they would appear to be settlements whose interests were divided between the two towns.

Most of the places in Warwickshire which were included in the administrative hinterland of Lutterworth did not fall into the town's transport hinterland. Six places were concerned, with a population of 1850; these parishes, it will be remembered, had been included in the poor law union of Lutterworth because the assistant commissioner felt that they looked to that town for services and marketing etc.⁽ⁱ⁾ A market day cart to Lutterworth did pass through or near to all the villages concerned with only one exception - viz: Stretton-under-Fosse, the most distant ^{village} ~~town~~ - but there were far better transport facilities available to the city of Coventry. For example, from Monks Kirby there was a Thursday cart to Lutterworth but, on the other hand, there was a daily cart to

(i) (See above p.182.)

Coventry, with an additional four on Fridays, Coventry's market day. It would, therefore, seem that, in spite of Lutterworth's proximity - it was only a little more than half the distance compared with the journey to Coventry, - ~~that~~ the bulk of the exchange was with the larger Warwickshire centre. In this area the longer journey to Coventry was preferred, as, to the north of Lutterworth, the longer journey to Leicester had been preferred. Thus to north and south, Lutterworth, with a population of less than 2,500, was losing its sphere of influence in the face of competition of the bigger 'county' centres of Leicester, with a population of 60,000, and Coventry, with a population of 36,000, respectively.

These discussions will have served to indicate the difficulties in attempting to designate concrete boundaries for the spheres of influence of the market towns, even in a period when the relationships between town and country were so relatively simple. Two types of evidence; one based on an examination of the facilities which made exchange between town and country possible; and the other on an examination of the causes of this exchange, have led to differing results in not a few instances. These differences, as areally expressed on the map have been considered. The differences, viewed from a statistical standpoint are illustrated in Table 11. In this table the population in each hinterland is shown as a percentage of the total population which is in either or both of the hinterlands. Thus, in the case of Leicester the population in

Table 11

Populations within the Transport and Administrative Hinterlands of the Leicestershire Market Towns in the mid-19th Century				
Centre	Total Population within either or both of the hinterlands	Percentage of the Total Population in the transport Hinterland	Percentage of the Total Population in the Administrative Hinterland	Percentage of the Total Population within both the Hinterlands
Leicester	49,979	100.0	58.0	58.0
Loughborough	31,618	84.2	84.4	68.0
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	25,439	71.2	84.5	55.0
Melton Mowbray	19,765	94.4	87.0	81.0
Hinckley	17,605	66.0	99.0	65.0
Market Harborough	17,457	78.6	87.7	65.0
Lutterworth	13,900	55.2	97.5	53.0

both hinterlands, plus the population which was in either of them totalled almost 50,000. Only 58% of that total is in the administrative hinterland whereas 100% was in the transport hinterland.

Apart from Leicester only in the case of Melton Mowbray had the transport hinterland the bigger population of the two. At Melton it was 7.4% larger. In all other cases the administrative hinterland was the larger - by .2% in the case of Loughborough, and ranging up to a maximum of 42.3% for Lutterworth.

In the final column is shown the relationship between the population in both hinterlands to that in only one. Melton Mowbray appeared as having the most compact sphere of influence while at the other end of the scale Lutterworth only had 53% of its total hinterland population within both boundaries.

These wide population variations in the different hinterlands of the market towns again stress the difficulty in determining 'average' hinterlands. In the case of Lutterworth, for example, 47% of a total hinterland population may or may not have looked to the town for the majority of services required.

However, bearing in mind the discussions earlier in this chapter, an attempt has been made - illustrated in Fig. 27 - to show the boundaries as single lines; not because there is considered to be any special value to be attached to this

LEICESTERSHIRE
DISTRIBUTION OF SETTLEMENT 1850
 SHOWING ALSO THE APPROXIMATE BOUNDARIES OF THE
 SPHERES OF INFLUENCE OF THE MARKET TOWNS

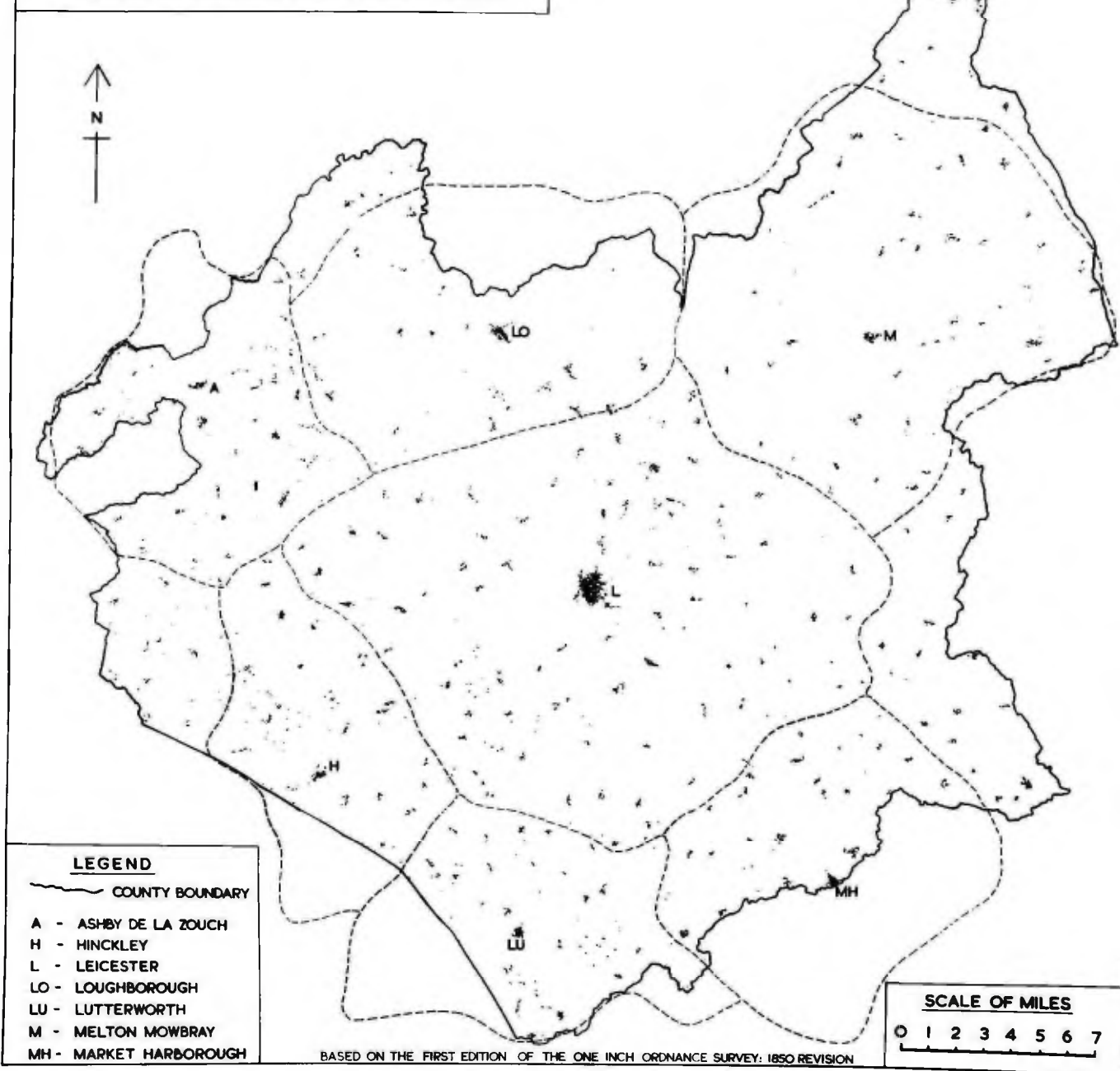


FIG. 27.

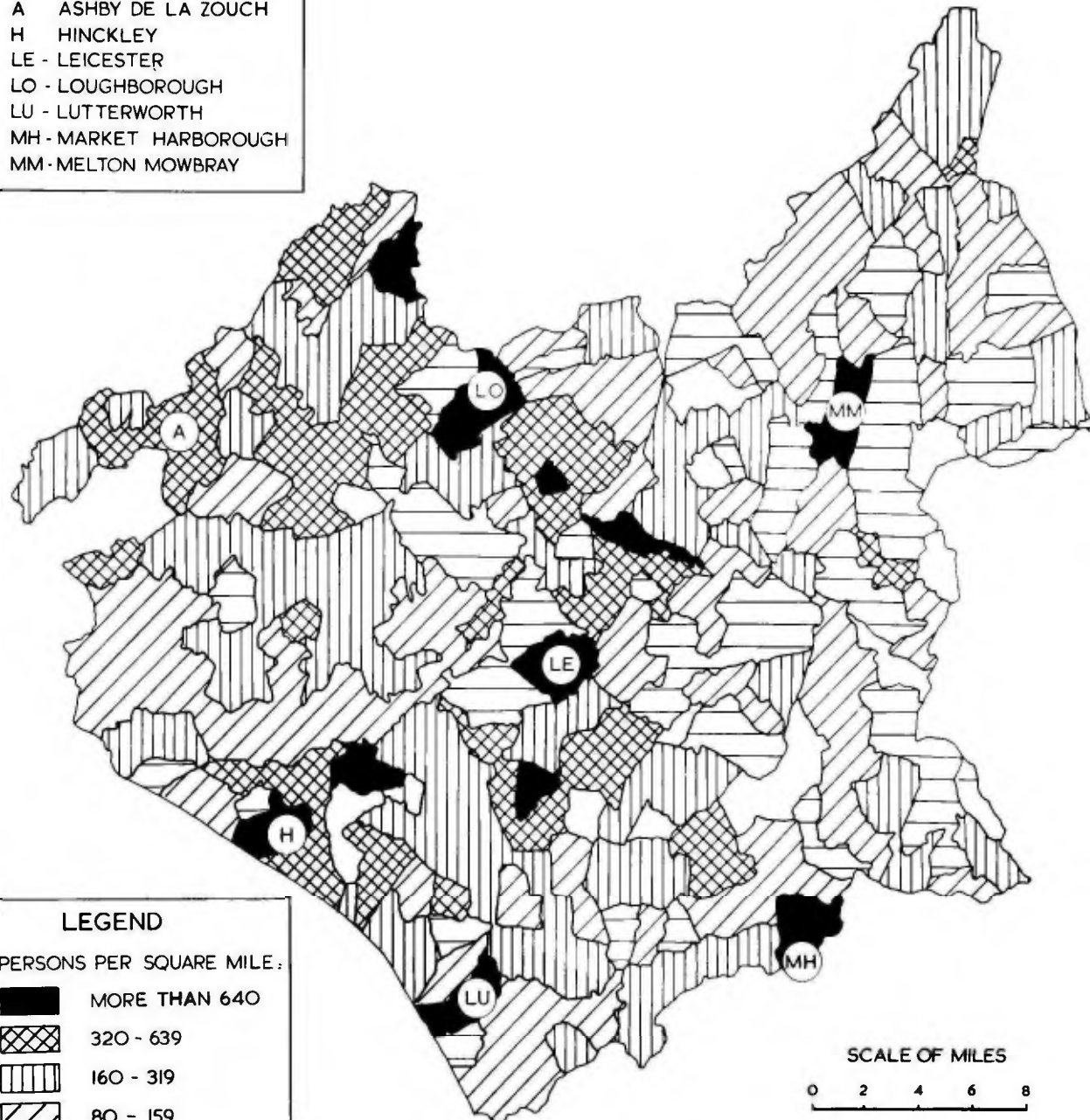
method of presentation, but rather mainly because it is the only method in which a good visual impression of the different spheres of influence can be obtained. On this diagram is also shown the settlement pattern of 1850. This clearly brings out the developing pattern of settlement on the boundary of the hinterlands of Loughborough and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, pointing out this area as the most obvious site for the development of a new centre. Nowhere else in the county is there a heavier pattern of settlement immediately around the boundary of two hinterlands. The settlement pattern has only been shown in Leicestershire, and thus the extent of the areas of influence of Leicestershire towns in other counties can be clearly distinguished. The division of Market Harborough's hinterland into two almost equal parts is well brought out - a feature which might be expected for a town built on a river dividing the one county from the other. On the other hand, of course, the large areas of East Leicestershire within the spheres of influence of peripheral towns also stand out.

Having thus examined the extent of the hinterlands it is now necessary to turn to analyse some features of their internal structure.

Over the county as a whole the average density of population in 1851 (excluding the 7 market towns) was 173 per square mile but, as seen in Fig. 27 and 28, there were variations within different areas of the county. The population densities

LEICESTERSHIRE: DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION. 1851

A ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH
H HINCKLEY
LE - LEICESTER
LO - LOUGHBOROUGH
LU - LUTTERWORTH
MH - MARKET HARBOROUGH
MM - MELTON MOWBRAY



LEGEND

PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE:

	MORE THAN 640
	320 - 639
	160 - 319
	80 - 159
	40 - 79
	LESS THAN 40

BASED ON CENSUS RETURNS 1851

SCALE OF MILES

0 2 4 6 8

FIG. 28.

within the several spheres of influence are shown in Table 12. The average density of population was exceeded in four of the hinterlands - viz: those of Loughborough, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Hinckley and Leicester; that is, in those hinterlands in which industrial expansion had continued since 1800.⁽ⁱ⁾

In the remaining three agricultural hinterlands of Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, and Lutterworth the population densities were much lower. Loughborough's hinterland had a density of population twice that of Melton Mowbray.

Although, in an earlier chapter, analysis revealed that in 1851 there was an overwhelming concentration of service provision in the market towns, yet it was noted that there were other towns and villages endowed with a certain degree of service facility.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ The number of these settlements, and the extent of the services which they provided, influenced relations between a market town and its hinterland; in a hinterland where no service provision was available then the influence of the market town would be at a maximum; in a hinterland where every settlement had some degree of service provision then the relationships between town and country would be very much less strong. Invariably, of course, the situation in reality fell somewhere between these two extremes, as is revealed in Fig. 26. This diagram shows service facilities which were available in each settlement of the county, and also

(i) { See above. p.110 }
(ii) { See above. p.122 }

shows the position of the settlements relative to the boundaries of the hinterlands.

In Fig. 12 a statistical analysis of the service provision in the hinterlands has been made. Within each hinterland the population has been totalled as have the indices of service provision for the settlements. For those areas marginal to the hinterlands the population, and the index of service provision, in the settlements concerned have been allocated to the two or more centres under whose influence the areas fell. Thus the totals shown in the first two columns of Fig. 12 have been calculated. Relating the one to the other, the third column shows the average number of points of service provision per thousand of the population of the hinterland. (this is the same basis on which the index of concentration of service facilities for each settlement in the county was calculated; the average figure for the county as a whole was 9.5 and for the market towns the indices ranged from 12.8 (Leicester) to 43.4 (Market Harborough.)⁽ⁱ⁾) The results as shown in the third column of table 12, only range from 3.6 to 5.9, and five of the seven hinterlands have indices within the range 4.6 to 5.6, showing that the differences in the service provision in the hinterlands are not very significant when they are related to the populations.

In the case of Melton Mowbray's hinterland the figure is considerably below the average one. A glance at Fig. 26 will suggest one of the reasons for this. Within Melton's

(i) (See above p. 126)

Table 12

Population and Service Provision within the hinterlands of the Leicestershire Market Towns in the Mid 19th Century							
Centre	Population of the Town	Population of the Hinterland	Area of the Hinterland (sq.mls)	Density of Population in the Hinterland	Total Indices of S.P. of the Settlements within the Hinterland	S.P. per 1000 of the Pop.	No. of Settlements with an index of S.P. greater than 5.0
Melton Mowbray	4434	17,421	140	125	62.9	3.6	4
Leicester	60584	43,853	220	200	201.9	4.6	10
Loughborough	11172	26,476	100	265	134.7	5.1	6
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	3762	21,487	90	239	113.1	5.2	6
Hinckley	6111	13,325	60	222	69.7	5.2	3
Market Harborough	2325	14,113	100	141	78.5	5.6	2
Lutterworth	2446	9,007	65	139	53.2	5.9	3

hinterland there are more than a score of settlements without an index of service provision, and one of them, Nether Broughton, had a population of more than 400. In contrast to this situation in the hinterland of Melton, we may look at that of Market Harborough, also an area of the county essentially devoted to agriculture, and there, only nine settlements were without service provision and these were mainly places with only about 100 inhabitants - e.g. Stonton Wyville, Glooston, Cranoe, etc.

In addition to the large number of settlements without service provision, however, the subsidiary centres within the hinterland of Melton were also of little importance in the urban hierarchy. Long Clawson only offered 7 services out of the 21 and had an index of S.P. of only 9.0; Wymondham had only 6 services and an index of 8.2; and Somerby, also only having six of the services, an index of 6.5. Their positions in the urban hierarchy are shown in tables 6 and 8.

It will be noted that these three subsidiary centres were located at the periphery of the hinterland, all of them being some six miles from Melton. To the north-east of the town another locally important settlement stands out - viz: Waltham-on-the-Wolds - which, however, did not qualify for inclusion as a subsidiary centre as it only offered five services (less than one quarter of the 21 considered). It was quite clearly, however, in the same category as Somerby or Long Clawson. There was no subsidiary centre between Loughborough and Melton

as settlement in this area was insignificant and would not, therefore, demand local service facilities.

The highest ratio between the population and the service provision of a hinterland is recorded for that of Lutterworth which with an index of 5.9 was about two-thirds higher than that for Melton. This is somewhat surprising in view of the high degree of efficiency of transport facilities which was found to exist between the town and its hinterland.⁽ⁱ⁾ However, Fig. 26 shows that the largest majority of the settlements in the hinterland and in the peripheral marginal areas had at least one or more of the neighbourhood services of grocer, boot repairer, tailor, and draper. There were only four settlements without any degree of service provision and these were but hamlets with a few score or less inhabitants. Furthermore, within the small hinterland there were three subsidiary service centres. Two of them, Walton and Broughton Astley were small and not of any great importance, (see table 8) but Welford, just over the Northamptonshire boundary, was of more significance offering 8 of the 21 services and had an index of Service Provision of 17.34.

Within the other hinterlands those settlements without facilities were interspersed amongst those with one or more of the four services mentioned above. These places with no index of S.P. were generally the smallest nucleated units. The distribution within the hinterlands of those settlements with

(i) (See above p. 163 and table 10)

an index of S.P. greater than five is in no case so regular as within the Melton hinterland. In particular, in the hinterland of Leicester there were 10 settlements in this category. Five of these, however, were located immediately to the south of the city in the expanding industrial suburbs and nearby villages.

In the hinterland of Hinckley no settlement was sufficiently well endowed to qualify as a subsidiary centre but the three industrial villages of Barwell, Earl Shilton, and Burbage, immediately adjacent to the town, each had indices of S.P. greater than 5.0.

Thus, though, as shown in Fig. 12, the hinterlands ranged in population from 9,000 to 44,000 and, in area from 60 square miles to 220 square miles, yet the service provision in each hinterland varied but comparatively slightly. In the hinterland of Loughborough there were a group of industrial settlements with relatively high indices of Service Provision. For example, there were Shepshed, to the west of Loughborough, with an index of 15.9; there was Quorn, in the Soar valley, with an index of 17.2; or Mountsorrel, immediately to the south, with an index of 9.3; and to the north of the town, Kegworth with an index of 24.0. On the other hand in the hinterland of Market Harborough there was only one settlement with an index above 10.0 - viz: Husbands Bosworth. However, when the populations of the two hinterlands were compared - Loughborough's 27,000 and Harborough's 14,000 - it is seen that the hinterland

of the latter town was relatively better served than that of Loughborough. This would indicate that the spread of an industrial population into the villages of the Soar valley had not been matched by an equivalent development of local service provision and hence the central town would become of even greater importance in providing for certain of the needs of the population of its hinterland. As industry grew within a hinterland, stock marketing would decline, but, on the other hand, the retail market would become of more significance. The situation in the market towns at this period is to be discussed in the next chapter.

Thus far, we have examined the spheres of influence of the market towns as revealed through the systematic analysis of formal evidence available, and by the most precise statistical methods possible considering the nature of this evidence, the complete accuracy and coverage of which cannot in all cases be guaranteed. Two sets of hinterlands have been determined and the median boundary resolved in so far as this was practicable or even desirable.

Other evidence of the spheres of influence of the towns in 1851 is not available; contemporary social and economic analyses of the towns and the county rarely referred to the functions of the towns as centralised servicing settlements. The only additional evidence comes from and through a study of the many contemporary newspapers which were published at the time. In 1851, the only newspaper published in Leicestershire

was the 'Leicester Journal' which started its life in 1774 as the 'Leicester and Nottingham Journal'. In the 1850's, however, publication of local newspapers was stimulated by the removal of the duties on advertisements and on the newspapers themselves. These duties had caused the papers to be sold at prices which greatly reduced the percentage of the population able to afford them, and hence it was only a newspaper likely to secure a purchasing population over a relatively wide and populous area which could be an economic possibility. An attempt had been made to start a newspaper in Loughborough - the second town of the county - in 1837, but this had failed in a little over two years perhaps because the area in which the paper circulated, and which was probably more or less coincident with the area over which the town of Loughborough had any influence, was not sufficiently wide to ensure a high enough number of subscribers. And this was in spite of the paper being renamed the 'Leicester, Nottingham and Derby Telegraph' presumably in an attempt to catch a larger public outside the immediate hinterland of Loughborough.⁽ⁱ⁾

The repeal of the two taxes in 1853 and 1859, however, meant that a paper circulating more intensively (as a result of lower prices) over a comparatively limited area became a possibility. Fig. 29 shows the dates at which the various towns in Leicestershire, and the peripheral settlements, published their first newspapers. Market Harborough led the way

(i) (Loughborough Telegraph. July 15th. 1837. December 28th 1939)

in 1854 with a monthly publication later converted into a weekly paper;⁽ⁱ⁾ Hinckley, Loughborough and Melton Mowbray followed suit in 1859, but immediately publishing weekly papers.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Of these four towns only Melton Mowbray has since failed to support a weekly newspaper continuously.

The other two market towns in Leicestershire had local newspapers for only short periods. Ashby-de-la-Zouch only from 1861 to 1864,⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ and Lutterworth from 1869 to 1871.^(iv)

Both probably failed because of competition from older established newspapers published in the nearby towns of Burton-on-Trent and Rugby respectively; both market towns formerly enjoying only equal status with the two Leicestershire towns, but which had both been stimulated in their development by their early railway connections on lines later to become part of the main line system of the country.

Castle Donington was the only other town in Leicestershire to have a local paper at this period^(v) but this was merely a localised edition of a Derby paper and carried news not of the area around Castle Donington, but only of the town itself, in addition to that of other Derbyshire towns. Its existence in the town for a period of 12 years does confirm the relative importance of the settlement and indicates its independence - to some extent at least - of any market town.

-
- (i) (Market Harborough Advertiser. January 1854 to date)
 - (ii) (The Melton Times 1859 to 1860. Loughborough Monitor and News 1859 to date, Hinckley Journal and South West Leicestershire Advertiser, 1859-1862)
 - (iii) (The Ashby News. Oct. 5th 1861 to October 1864. Not available in the B.M.)
 - (iv) (The Lutterworth News. July 9th. 1870 to February 18th 1871)
 - (v) (Castle Donington Weekly Express. June 26th 1855 to Nov. 30th 1867)

MID 19TH. CENTURY NEWSPAPERS OF LEICESTERSHIRE AND PERIPHERAL TOWNS

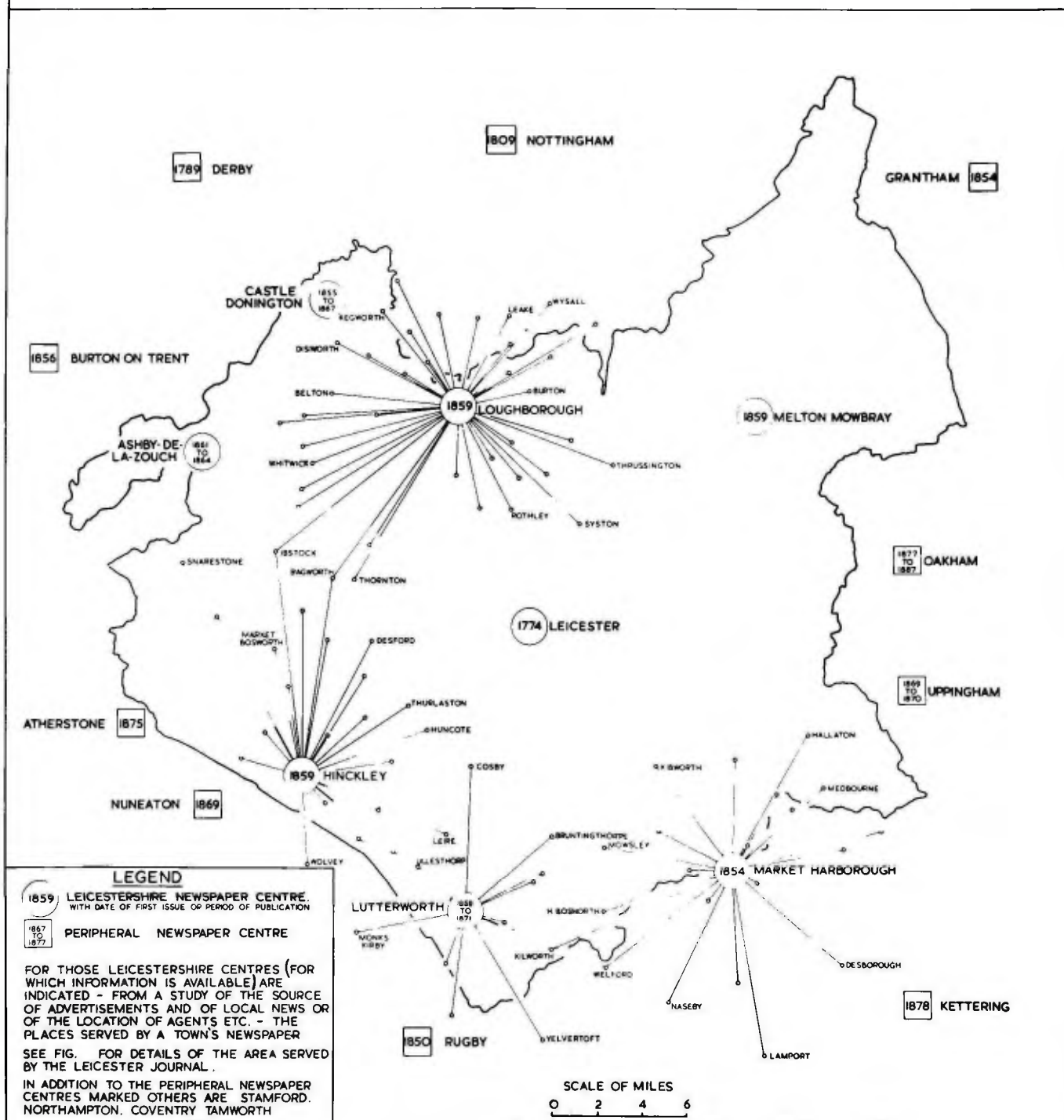


FIG. 29.

In the introduction to this thesis it was suggested that evidence of the circulation area of a local newspaper would be a guide to the sphere of influence of the town.⁽ⁱ⁾ To establish a circulation area for a newspaper some 100 years ago is not a straightforward task. The only evidence available is that internal to the paper itself and which, in the interests of publicity, would endeavour to give a picture of the most extensive circulation area possible.

Several of the papers, however, at this period, gave the names and addresses of their correspondents and agents in the surrounding villages. These villages may perhaps, with a certain degree of accuracy, be equated with those in which the paper circulated.

The evidence was particularly comprehensive for the Loughborough paper, and in Figure 29 are indicated those settlements in which an agent for the paper was located. The circulation area thus determined was rather wider than that found to lie within the hinterland of the town. This was especially noticeable to the south-west. We have already seen that there was market-day transport from Ibstock, Bagworth and Thornton, and other villages in the area, to Loughborough and perhaps the distribution of the paper in those places was a mirror of that fact. It does, however, also confirm that there was some exchange between Loughborough and that part of the county in spite of the closer proximity of other market towns. There were only two other places having agents of the paper

(i) (See above. p. 19)

which lay outside the town's hinterland. These were Syston and Thrussington to the south-east of the town. The former place was nearer to Leicester with which it had very good communications and it is difficult to imagine that Loughborough influence was of any great importance. Thrussington, on the other hand, lay on the peripheries of the hinterlands of Leicester, Melton Mowbray, and Loughborough and the sales of the Loughborough paper in the village confirm the influence of this town in the area. It might also be noted that there was no agent of the paper in Castle Donington and the adjacent settlements, confirming the absence of Loughborough's influence in this district.

For the Hinckley newspaper also, a comprehensive list of the location of agents for the paper was available. Their distribution is shown on Fig. 29. The absence of agents in the Leicestershire villages to the west of the town re-emphasises the orientation of the settlements in this part of the county with a centre other than Hinckley. This feature of town-country relationships in this part of the county in 1851 was also seen in the examination of the transport facilities. Around Market Bosworth, however, there were a considerable number of villages with agents and this does suggest that there were contacts with Hinckley from this area in spite of its having been outside the town's transport hinterland. There was only one agent for the Hinckley newspaper in Warwickshire but, as this agency was in the most important village in the area, local distribution may have taken place from there to the other settlements in the sphere of

influence of Hinckley. To the north-east, Thurlaston and Huncote had agents suggesting that they had contacts with Hinckley, in spite of their closer connections with Leicester as revealed in a study of the transport facilities.

For Market Harborough the picture of the distribution of the paper has been built up by a study of the items of local village news reported in the paper over a period of six months. Regular news items were printed concerning the settlements indicated in Fig. 29. The outermost villages more or less represent the limits of the determined hinterland of the town. To the East, however, regular reports appeared from the settlement of Hallaton which in the mid-19th century was otherwise in the sphere of influence of Uppingham. To the south, Desborough and Lamport were a little beyond the limits of the hinterland of the town and suggest that contacts with Market Harborough came from a little further afield in these directions. To the west, it is significant that both the Market Harborough and the Lutterworth papers gave news of Welford which, it will be remembered, lay on the boundary of the hinterland between the two towns.

For Lutterworth, the diagram of villages served by the paper is based on an examination of local advertisements and local news appearing in the paper during the first six months of its appearance. In this case the information does not appear to be comprehensive but the picture of villages served again resembles that of the hinterland determined by other methods.

The only exceptions are that Cosby and Yelvertoft were rather beyond the hinterland boundary though, in fact, they both had the advantages of market day transport to the town.

On the whole, therefore, for these smaller market towns the distribution of the local paper in the mid-nineteenth century confirms the extent of their marketing hinterlands, as determined by other more reliable means, and it also suggests, in some instances, an extension of the areas over which particular towns exerted their influence at this period.

In the case of Leicester, however, the distribution of the paper suggests a new type of hinterland for the city. Previously Leicester and its hinterland has been discussed along the same lines as those for the smaller towns. We have established the area over which Leicester provided services similar to those provided by the smaller towns. In the mid-nineteenth century, however, Leicester was rather more important than the other six towns in the county. It had a population twice the size of that of all the other six towns added together, and was six times the size of the next largest town - viz: Loughborough. It provided certain specialised retailing and professional services - to be described in more detail in the next chapter; it was the seat of justice for the county at the Assizes and Quarter Sessional level (compared with the county court and petty sessional level of the other towns); the Justices of the Quarter Sessions meeting in Leicester provided what county administration there was at

this period. It was, in short, the social, economic, cultural, and administrative centre for an area wider than that included in its local sphere of influence.

As shown in Figs. 30 and 31 the distribution of the Leicester Journal in the mid-19th century reflected this wider service area. We may also recall that the area accessible to Leicester by carriers' carts facilities in 1851 embraced almost the whole of the county, there being a marked correlation between the area with transport facilities to Leicester and the area over which the Leicester Journal circulated. (See Fig. 19). Fig. 30 has been constructed following on an examination of the source of advertisements of sales and auctions and the like appearing in the paper during the year 1831. For Fig. 31 the source of advertisements and the appearance of items of local news was analysed for the period January to June in 1851. The close correlation of the results for the two years indicates that the picture of the distribution of the paper ~~in the two diagrams~~ was not an abnormal one.

Both diagrams show a complete coverage of Leicestershire with but the following exceptions. Firstly, the area to the north-east of Melton Mowbray. The limited number of advertisements and items of local news originating in this area suggests that there was little attachment to the county town. Secondly, the same was also true of the north-west of the county around the town of Castle Donington. An examination of the Derby newspaper showed that closer connections existed

SOURCE OF ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE LEICESTER JOURNAL 1831

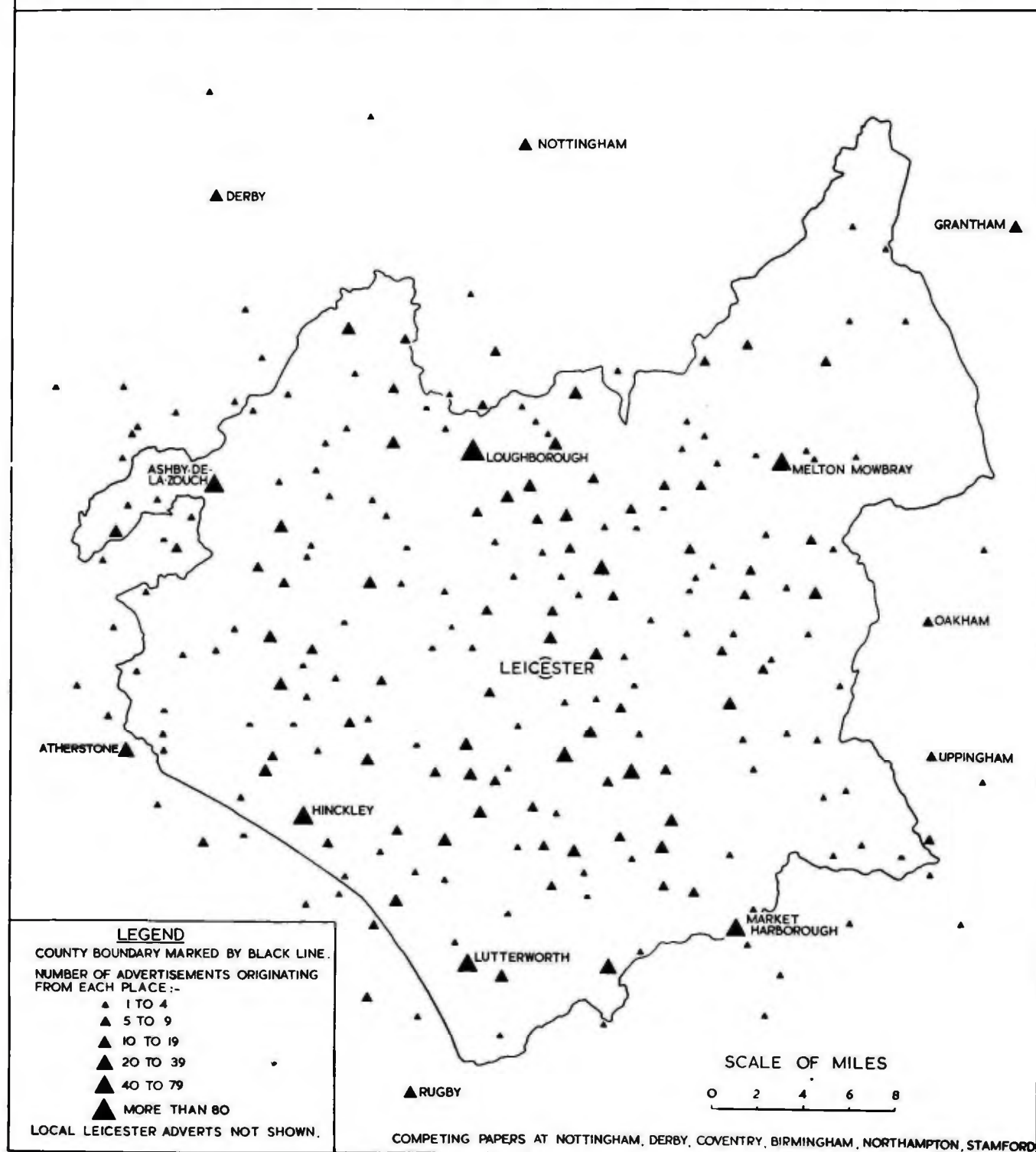


FIG. 30.

MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY CIRCULATION AREA OF THE LEICESTER JOURNAL

BASED ON A STUDY OF THE JOURNAL FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY-JUNE 1851

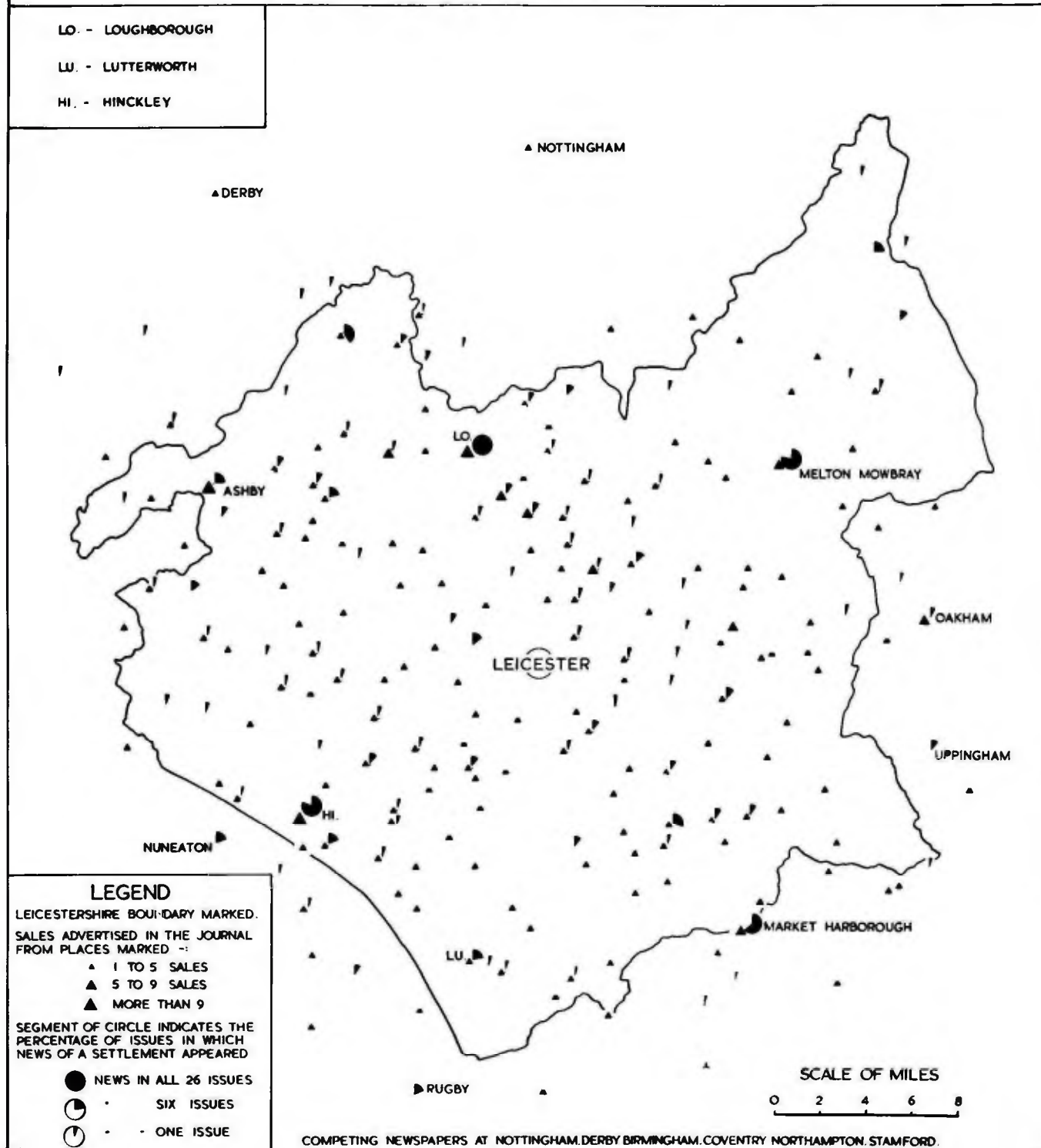


FIG. 31.

with that town. In the extreme west of the county some of the villages used the Leicester paper for advertising, but by no means all of them, thus suggesting a rather weaker link with Leicester. There was also an incomplete coverage on the south of the county, in the Welland valley, in an area where Northampton might also have been expected to exert some influence.

Outside the county boundary of Leicestershire the contacts with Leicester via the Journal were mainly isolated ones. The only areas of significant concentration were just over the border in the north-east part of Warwickshire; immediately over the border into south Derbyshire, near to Ashby-de-la-Zouch; and, of course, the towns of Rugby, Atherstone, Oakham, and Uppingham - representing the outposts of the wider hinterland of the city of Leicester.

The important contacts between Leicester and the other market towns in the county are shown in the use made of the Leicester Journal for advertising by the inhabitants of these smaller towns; and the regularity with which their news is reported. For example, there was news of Loughborough in all 26 issues in the first six months of 1851; in 23 issues for Hinckley and Melton Mowbray; and in 17 issues in the case of Market Harborough.

The county of Leicester was delimited as the 'sphere of influence of Leicester',⁽ⁱ⁾ when it was founded in the 10th.

(i) (Green F.H.W. The value of Transport Services in the Delimitation of Town and Country. Geographical Journal.)

century; its area of influence was essentially the same in the mid-19th century - with the major exception of the north east part of the county - as revealed in an analysis of the ^{distribution of} _^ newspaper published in the city.

A study of the contents of the newspapers at this period brought little information concerning the existence or the extent of the hinterlands of the market towns. Occasionally some item of news would reflect the extent of a towns hinterland; for example, the detailing of farmers attending the preliminary meeting of a Cattle Assurance Association at Lutterworth (all the farmers with one exception were from within the area of the hinterland previously described)⁽ⁱ⁾ or the recording of the places from which the entries to the Loughborough meat show were drawn one particular Christmas (Only three of the places were outside the previously delimited hinterland.)⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Local news was, however, at a premium at this period and comprehensive reading and analysis brought few practical results as far as this study was concerned.

(i) (Melton News. 5th April 1862)
(ii) (Melton News. 20th December 1862)

CHAPTER SIX.

THE MARKET TOWNS IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Previously in our examination of the urban hierarchy in Leicestershire in the mid-nineteenth century, the market towns have been merely differentiated from the other settlements in the county. Their dominating position as service centres was noted and then they were set aside. Since then the hinterlands of these market towns have been established and examined and it is now necessary to give further consideration to the status of the towns themselves.

In thus differentiating the market towns from the other settlements; and in studying other hinterlands on a more or less uniform basis the impression may have been given that the towns were themselves of uniform status and importance. This was far from being the case, although, of course, they each provided a certain number of basic centralised services, by definition.

In table 13 have been drawn together for the seven market towns several features of their structure, already ~~been~~ examined in earlier chapters, together with certain new analyses. The table clearly brings out the important differences between the towns. Their indices of service provision ranged from 756 in the case of Leicester down to 80 in the case of Lutterworth; their indices of concentration of service facilities ranged from 43.4 for Market Harborough to only 12.5 for Leicester;

the numbers of market day carriers' carts, from 219 to Leicester down to only 19 to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. These features have been examined earlier in the section.

These, however, were probably not the most outstanding mid-nineteenth century differences between the towns. This is seen in the range of population between the towns. Their populations ranged from 2,325 to 60, 584 - such enormous differences, that had one not already seen the similarity of certain functions of Leicester and Market Harborough - viz: in the provision of administrative services or the provision of transport facilities - the inclusion of the two towns in a similar grouping would be open to question.

The reason behind these differences in population has been briefly mentioned in other chapters.⁽¹⁾ It is now necessary to make a somewhat closer study. To obtain statistical comparisons a return must be made to the census returns of 1831 in which the employment structure of the settlements was detailed. Similar information was not collated in the returns for 1851.

The 1831 figures are detailed in table 14. While in each of the towns we see that there were large numbers employed in the retail trades and handicrafts, ranging from 25% in the case of Hinckley to over 60% in the case of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, yet, on the other hand, we note that in the three largest settlements there were also comparable numbers of

(1) (See above. pp. 110, 130.)

Table 13

Table showing aspects of the relationships between the Leicestershire Towns and their Hinterlands in the mid-nineteenth Century							
-	Population	Percentage Inc. in Pop. since 1800	Index of Service Provision	Index of Concent. of Service Facility	No. of mkt. day carriers carts	Pop. of the Town's hinterland	No. of pop. of town's hinterland in the Town
Leicester	60,584	257.4	756	12.5	209	43,853	57.6
Loughborough	10,900	139.8	218	20.0	49	26,476	29.1
Hinckley	6,111	20.5	103	16.8	29	13,325	32.0
Melton Mowbray	4,391	148.6	123	28.4	54	17,421	20.3
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	3,762	-	122	32.7	19	21,487	14.9
Lutterworth	2,446	46.8	80	32.7	34	9,007	21.2
Market Harborough	2,325	35.5	101	43.4	38	14,113	14.2

workers employed in the manufacturing industries. Indeed in the case of Hinckley there were almost twice as many in manufacturing as in retail trades and handicrafts. For the other four towns the total figures of men employed in manufacturing was only a little more than a hundred.

Here, therefore, we can see clearly that the inflated populations of Leicester, Loughborough and Hinckley were due to the towns fulfilling a function additional to that of servicing the neighbouring communities, and that it was not due to an entirely different set of circumstances.

It would seem that the situation in 1851 was similar to that of 1831 for the population of the towns remained fairly steady. Loughborough's population increased by only 100 from 10,800 to 10,900 between the two dates and that of Hinckley actually declined from 6491 to 6111 in the same period. Only in the case of Leicester was there a large change in the population; an increase from 38,000 in 1831 to over 60,000 in 1851, as a result of industrial expansion of the city consequent upon the opening of rail communication first with the Leicestershire coalfield, and, in 1840, with the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire field. Thus by 1851 the employment situation in the case of Leicester had become accentuated even more towards industrial employment with the centralised service industries providing occupations for but a minority of the population.

The contrast between the settlements with reference to

Table 14

Table showing the employment of males over 20 in the Leicestershire Market Towns in 1831 (Based on 1831 Census Returns)								
Town	No. of Males over 20	No. in Agriculture	No. in Manufacture	No. in Retail Trading Handicrafts	No. in Professions	Labourers	Others	Servants
Leicester	10,030	345	3407	4159	434	942	556	187
Loughborough	2,604	259	918	899	96	264	127	41
Hinckley	1,560	172	692	367	57	131	116	25
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	1,051	218	8	640	60	65	36	24
Melton Mowbray	787	86	17	405	42	150	41	46
Market Harborough	670	14	31	305	48	144	97	31
Lutterworth	569	95	62	241	22	58	81	10

the degree of industrialisation is also brought out in contemporary descriptions of the towns. Most mid-19th century directories and newspapers made no mention of industry in the town of Melton. The only exception was in a directory of 1829, where it was stated of Melton:

"There was no manufactory in the place until 1825 when one was erected for making Nottingham lace....but only a few hands are employed in it."⁽ⁱ⁾

In contrast, the effect of industry on the town of Loughborough was given prominence in contemporary documents. For example, the following description appeared in a mid 19th century directory:

"Few towns experienced a more rapid increase (in population) in the first thirty years of the present century than Loughborough, and for this increase (from 4546 to 10,800) it is indebted to the manufacture of worsted hosiery, to the spinning of mohair, to the great increase in cotton hosiery, and chiefly to the introduction of the lace net machine in 1809. There are in the town many stocking frames and framesmiths, two worsted mills, an iron foundry, a bell foundry, two dyeing establishments, several malt kilns....and commodious wharves at which much business is done."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (Pigot's National Commercial Directory. 1829; p.501)

(ii) (White's Directory of Leicester and Rutland for 1863.p.391)

Concerning Leicester, the following comments were made:

"The staple trades of the town are the manufacture of worsted and cotton hosiery, framework knitting, worsted spinning, wool combing and dyeing, and, in addition, to the manufacture of hose, a great quantity of which is exported, there are manufacturers of lace, cotton thread, rope, twine, and numerous wool staplers." (i)

These contemporary descriptions of the industrial structure of Leicester and Loughborough give a clear indication of the importance and variety of the textile industries which had developed in the two towns.

The chief business of Hinckley was given as "the making of coarse stockings" (ii) and the industrial progress of the town in the mid-nineteenth century was seen in the introduction of the factory system into the hosiery industry in 1845 and the application of steam power into the industry in 1855. (iii) However, the industry of Hinckley had been languishing for the first half of the nineteenth century. There had been but a small increase in the population over the 50 years (see table 13) and depression amongst the framework knitters of the town had been rampant for many years. This fact was vividly recorded by the Assistant Commissioner of the

(i) (The Post Office Directory. London. 1848. p.2551)
(ii) (ibid. p.2540)
(iii) (Francis, H.J. History of Hinckley. Hinckley 1930. p.143)

Poor Law in 1837, when he wrote:

"In no other locality could be found so large a settled population of which so large a proportion is liable to be thrown wholly for support on the poor rate. Out of 2586 families....2052 derive their maintenance from trade and manufacture, by far the greater part of these from different branches of the stocking trade. During seasons of depression nearly 2000 hands have been thrown upon the parish in one week in Hinckley alone."⁽ⁱ⁾

This clearly illustrates the dominating influence of industry on the life of the town of Hinckley at this period. By 1859 the local paper could record that "improved machinery and easier means of communication" had established the town's "productiveness and prosperity".⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Again, in contrast to this picture of industry, superimposed upon the older functions of a market town such that the latter had become of much smaller significance in the life of the town, it is possible to turn to the towns of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Lutterworth and find examples of places in which the centralised service functions of the settlements were still the dominant feature of the 'modus vivendi'.

In the case of Lutterworth it was pointed out that:

"The manufacture of cotton stockings was at one time of considerable importance to Lutterworth; there is now, however, little doing in this branch....the local trade

(i) (Hinckley Union Correspondence. Report of the Assistant Commissioner. 1837. M.H.12. 6443)

(ii) (The Hinckley Journal; Feb.19th. 1859)

of the place being mainly supported by the opulent farmers and graziers of the neighbourhood."(i)

Confirmation of this early 19th century decline of industry in Lutterworth is obtained from another directory:

"Calico weaving and silk ribbon weaving were largely carried on here during the latter part of the last and the beginning of the present century; but the town now derives its chief support from general trade and its markets and fairs"(ii)

Thus the increase in the population of the town from 1801 to 1851 by some 46.8% was a result of the expansion of the servicing industries.

As far as Ashby-de-la-Zouch was concerned, the inhabitants were "chiefly engaged in general trade and consequently the town was free from the noise and effluvia of a populous manufacturing place."(iii)

At Market Harborough the unimportance of manufactures is revealed in the lack of any description of them in contemporary books and papers. Only one mention is made of manufactories and this referred mainly to industries dependent on local agricultural products.

"At Market Harborough are now a large pea manufactory, several malt houses, a brewery, and a brush manufactory, and all the trades usually found in a small market town deriving their chief support from agriculture."

(i) (Pigot's Directory for Leicester and Rutland for 1841. p.38)
 (ii) (White's Directory of Leicester and Rutland for 1863. p.752)
 (iii) (ibid. p.432)

Thus, both by an examination of statistical evidence, and by an examination of contemporary written evidence, it is possible to clearly divide the market towns into two groups. The first group, (in which are placed the towns of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray) were those towns solely fulfilling functions as central settlements; and in the second group were the towns of Leicester, Loughborough and Hinckley, in which expansion of population had resulted from the development of industrial functions not related to the products of the hinterlands of the towns. By the mid-19th century the industrial functions of these settlements had assumed a greater importance than the servicing and marketing facilities which the towns offered to the population of the surrounding districts. By 1880 it was written of Loughborough :

"Its prosperity is mainly due to its hosiery manufacture; were it not for this the town would still be as insignificant in size and business as Ashby, Market Harborough or Market Bosworth, all of which have been outstripped in the race by Loughborough."⁽ⁱ⁾

The extent of the industrialisation of the market towns played an important part in determining the relationship between the population of the town and that within the town's hinterland. This relationship is shown in table 13.

(i) (Fletcher, Rev. W.G. Historical Handbook to Loughborough. Loughborough 1881. p.39)

The total population of a town plus its hinterland ranged from 104,000 in the case of Leicester down to 11,500 in the case of Lutterworth. It is this fact which largely accounts for the range in the indices of service provision for the market towns. The town plus hinterland population of Leicester was nine times as great as that for Lutterworth; the difference between the two town's indices of service provision was proportionately the same.

The population of the town as a percentage of the population of town plus hinterland varied from 57.6% for Leicester down to 14.2% for Market Harborough. (This percentage for Market Harborough may be slightly too low for the real population of the town was rather higher than 2,325. As Fig. 32 shows, by 1840 some building had taken place outside the boundary of Market Harborough chapelry; these houses etc. were, however, essentially a part of the town). In addition to Market Harborough, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Lutterworth and Melton Mowbray each had a population under one quarter the size of that within their respective hinterlands.

The contrast between these four towns and the other three again brings out, firstly, the great dependence of the former group on the trade of the hinterland so that prosperity could be maintained, and secondly, the declining relative importance of the country trade to the towns in the second group. Within Leicester many of the service industries of the town would

MID 19TH. CENTURY MORPHOLOGY OF TWO LEICESTERSHIRE MARKET TOWNS

MELTON MOWBRAY

MARKET HARBOROUGH



FIG. 32.

attach more importance to trade with the locally resident population of 61,000 rather than with the business likely to arise from the trade of the 44,000 people in the hinterland many of whom would be less regular customers and some of whom may also have looked to other settlements for their requirements. Clearly, in this particular instance, the importance of the hinterland trade to Leicester was of relatively less importance than formerly, for, in 1800, the population of the hinterland exceeded that of the town by several thousands. (i)

For Hinckley and Loughborough the mid-19th century populations of their hinterlands exceeded that of the towns themselves but to a considerably less extent than at the beginning of the century. In 1800, Loughborough's population was only one-fifth of that of its hinterland; by 1851 it had grown to be one-half the size.

Hence, development of industry in Leicester, Loughborough, and Hinckley, with the accompanying rise in the population of the towns, in addition to relegating the service function to a secondary position as an employer of labour, also had the effect of making the service industry in the town rather more dependent on the locally resident population than on the population of the surrounding hinterland area.

In an earlier chapter the index of service provision for each settlements in the county was determined from an examination of the availability of a selected group of 21

(i) (See above. p. 106)

services. As was then pointed out, the 21 services were selected as a representative group of criteria upon which a quantitative analysis of service provision could be made. For the market towns (with the exception of Leicester), however, a more comprehensive analysis of their service facilities has been made. Again the enumerators returns in the census of 1851 have been utilised. These detailed the employment of every individual and thus it has been possible to ascertain the number of trades, crafts, retailing concerns, and professions available in each town. The result of these investigations is shown in Table 15.

116 different service occupations were recognised and these have been divided into four main categories. Firstly, the professional services; eight of these were recognised, although the presence of a barrister at Lutterworth was an anomaly and he could not have been practising locally. In addition it is doubtful if there was any effective difference between a surgeon and a doctor at this period. Four of the professional services were available in all of the six centres. Loughborough had the most complete range of the remainder. Secondly, a group termed wholesalers and transporters; in this case the situation was rather different in that out of the 14 services recognised only that of a carrier was available locally in each town. Two others - a corn dealer and a coach operator - were available in five of the six settlements. These may perhaps be viewed as the basic requirements of a

Table 15

Table showing comprehensive details of the Service Facilities available in the Leicester Market Towns in 1851 (from an analysis of the enumerators returns in the Census of 1851)

Service	Ashby de la Zouch	Hinckley	Lough- borough	Lutter- worth	Market Harborough	Melton Mowbray	No. of the towns in which the service was found
1. Professional Services							
Accountant			X			X	2
Auctioneer	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Barnster				X			1
Dentist			X				1
Doctor	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Solicitor	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Surgeon	X		X	X		X	4
Veterinary Surgeon	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
2. Wholesale Dealers, Agents & Transporters, etc.							
Carrier	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Cattle Dealer	X	X	X	X			4
Cheese Factor						X	1
Coach Builder	X		X			X	3
Coach Driver	X		X	X	X	X	5
Corn Dealer	X	X	X		X	X	5
Drayman			X			X	2
Lace Agent					X		1
Land Agent	X				X		2
House Dealer			X	X			2
Omnibus Proprietor		X					1
Bookseller	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Butcher	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Cafe Proprietor			X				1
China & Earthen- ware Dealer	X		X	X			3
Chemist & Druggist	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Clothier	X	X	X				3
Coal Merchant	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Confectioner	X	X	X		X	X	5
Draper	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Fishmonger	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Flower Seller		X	X				2
Fruiterer	X						1
Furniture Dealer		X	X				2
Game Dealer	X				X		2
General Dealer	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Glover	X	X	X		X	X	5
Greengrocer	X	X					2
Grocer	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Haberdasher		X	X		X	X	4
Hairdresser	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Hardware Dealer			X				1
Hatter	X	X	X			X	4
Hosier	X		X	X	X	X	5
Innkeeper	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Ironmonger	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Jeweller		X	X				2
Milliner	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Milk Seller		X	X				4
Musical Instru- ment Dealer			X				1
Newsagent			X				1
Pawnbroker		X					1
Perfumer			X				1
Pikelet & Muffin Dealer			X				1
Salt Dealer				X			1
Seedsman			X				1
Shopkeeper (General)	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Small Ware Dealer	X	X	X				3
Tallow Chandler	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Tea Dealer		X	X	X		X	4
Timber Merchant			X			X	2
Tripe Dealer			X		X		2
Wine & Spirit Mer.	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
4. Craftsmen							
Basket Maker		X	X	X	X		4
Blacksmith	X	X	X	X	X	X	6

Musical Instru- ment Dealer			X				1
Newsagent			X				1
Pawnbroker		X					1
Perfumer			X				1
Pikelet & Muffin Dealer			X				1
Salt Dealer				X			1
Seedsman			X				1
Shopkeeper(General)	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Small Ware Dealer	X	X	X				3
Tallow Chandler	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Tea Dealer		X	X	X		X	4
Timber Merchant			X			X	2
Tripe Dealer			X		X		2
Wine & Spirit Mer.	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
4. Craftsmen							
Basket Maker		X	X	X	X		4
Blacksmith	X	X	X	X		X	6
Brewer		X	X		X		3
Bricklayer	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Brushmaker		X	X		X		3
Bookbinder	X		X				2
Builder	X	X	X	X		X	5
Cap Maker			X				1
Carpenter	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Cabinet Maker	X	X	X			X	4
Chair Maker	X	X	X	X			4
Chimney Sweep		X	X	X	X		4
Clothes Peg Maker				X			1
Cooper	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Cordwainer	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Cork Cutter				X			1
Cup Maker			X				1
Currier	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Cutler	X	X	X			X	4
Dressmaker	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Fellmonger	X			X		X	3
Gunsmith			X		X		2
Harness Maker	X	X			X		3
Joiner	X	X	X		X	X	5
Locksmith			X				1
Maltster	X		X				2
Miller	X		X	X	X	X	5
Millwright	X		X			X	3
Nailor			X				1
Painter	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Plasterer	X		X	X		X	4
Plumber	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Printer	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Rope Maker				X	X		2
Saddler	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Sawyer			X				1
Shoebinder			X	X			2
Shoemaker	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Slater						X	1
Stone Mason	X				X		2
Straw Bonnett Maker				X	X		2
Staymaker			X				1
Tailor	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Tanner	X	X	X		X	X	5
Tinman		X	X	X	X		4
Umbrella Maker		X	X	X	X		4
Upholsterer	X		X		X	X	4
Watch & Clock Maker	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Wheelwright	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Whitesmith		X	X	X	X		4
Wood Turner	X				X	X	3
No. of Services available in each town(max.116)	68	66	94	63	64	63	

market town in this group of occupations. Most of the others were found in only a minority of the six centres and owed their livelihood to some special feature of the town and/or its hinterland; as, for example, the cheese factor at Melton Mowbray, presumably to serve the local rural industry; or the potato dealer at Lutterworth presumably depending on a locally important agricultural product. The house dealer and the land agent each found in two settlements fulfilled specialised tasks undertaken most probably in the other settlements, where, of course, similar services would be required, by the auctioneer or other dual purpose personality.

Thirdly, the retailers; 43 separate types of retail establishment were recognised (in cases where a shop was shown as a multi-purpose one - viz: haberdasher/hairdresser - the first named function was taken to be of primary importance). In 1851, before the days of department stores, the absence of a specialised retailing establishment for a specific commodity suggests that the trade of the settlement was insufficient to maintain it as a separate unit and, therefore, two or more commodities were sold in the same establishment). No fewer than 19 of the 43 retail establishments were found in all six or in five of the market towns. 20 of them were available only in a minority of the towns and thus their presence or absence represent the degree of specialised shopping facilities in each of the centres. Of the twenty, 75% were available in Loughborough pointing out the greater variety of specialised

shops in this town when compared to the position in the remaining towns; Hinckley had only 7 of the specialised shops; Ashby-de-la-Zouch - 4; Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray - 2.

Fourthly, the craftsmen; 51 separate occupations have been listed. Of this number, 19 were present in 5 or 6 of the settlements and a further ten in four of them. These accounted for rather more than half the total. The distribution of the remainder is again an indication of increased specialisation. For example, in the four settlements where there was no bookbinder the work arising in the town and the hinterland was presumably undertaken by the printer. Several of the services included in the list, however, have been locally important hand industries dependent on an area wider than the town's hinterland both for the raw materials and for the market. Examples of these were the clothes-peg maker and the cork cutter found in Lutterworth. It is, however, impossible to distinguish these accurately from the specialised traders working for a local market and thus they have had to be included in the list of craftsmen. Of the 22 craftsmen found in only a minority of the settlements 13 were available in Loughborough; 8 in Market Harborough; 7 in Ashby-de-la-Zouch; 6 in Lutterworth; 4 in Melton Mowbray; and 3 in Hinckley. In this case there was not such a noticeable difference between the number available at Loughborough and the numbers in the remainder of the towns. Many of the specialised craftsmen would

be catering for the rural population in particular, rather than for the population of the town and hinterland in general, and the rural population in the hinterland of Loughborough did not exceed that of the other market towns to any great extent. The difference between the number of specialised shops and specialised craftsmen was also noticeable at Hinckley, whose hinterland included many settlements dependent on industry rather than on agriculture.

Looking at the overall situation of service provision in the six centres an interesting picture is revealed. Of the 116 services found in one or more of the towns there were between 63 and 68 found in five of them. Thus the five towns of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Hinckley, Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray offered an almost comparable range of service facility, 36 of the sixty-odd services in these settlements were common to all of them and a further 25 were found in either three or four of them - these figures stress the basic similarity in the type of service provision in the market towns in the mid-19th century.

Only Loughborough stood out from the general pattern in having a rather more varied degree of service provision. Its 94 services included 14 not found in any of the other towns (there were only 13 other services only found in one town - 6 in Lutterworth and one or two in the other four centres). Table 13 suggests the reasons for the enhanced importance of Loughborough. Firstly, it was a town considerably more populous than the remainder; Hinckley, the next largest town

was only a little more than half the size, and Market Harborough and Lutterworth were only a quarter of the size. Secondly, its hinterland was more populous than any other, having 5,000 more inhabitants than that of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, the nearest competitor. Together, Loughborough and its hinterland had a population of more than 37,000 - 50% greater than the population of Ashby and its hinterland and three times the size of the population in Lutterworth plus hinterland. It is not, therefore, surprising that Loughborough could offer specialised services to its inhabitants, denied to the people in the smaller towns where there was insufficient demand to make such facilities possible. To take but one example, the inhabitants of Loughborough and hinterland had a dentist available to meet the requirements of those desiring such a service. People in other parts of the county could not obtain such a service in their normal marketing town and thus would have had to resort to Leicester for the facility when the need arose.

Loughborough, therefore, was less dependent on Leicester for the specialised services and secondly, by virtue of the additional attractions and services which the town offered, its sphere of influence extended to take in part of the peripheries of the spheres of influence of the less important towns. We have examined the greater influence of Loughborough in a part of the county nearer to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and from two sources of evidence - viz. transport facilities and circulation areas of the local newspapers - the influence of Loughborough in the Bagworth-

Thornton-Barlestone-Markfield area, over ten miles from the town, has been previously noted. (see Figs. 19 and 29).

Leicester has been excluded from the foregoing analysis. As previously pointed out, it was impracticable to work through the originals of the 1851 census returns for this city of 60,000 people. However, the 1831 census returns gave a detailed 'Specification of males (over 20 years) employed in the retail trades, or in handicrafts, as masters or workmen' for the towns of Leicester and Loughborough. This showed that, whereas in Loughborough there were 66 different occupations, that in Leicester there were no fewer than 100; the additional 50% included specialised retailers such as cheesemongers, fruiterers, poulterers, and tobacconists, etc., and specialised craftsmen such as carvers and gilders, furriers and pattern makers. Contemporary directories confirm the existence in Leicester of these specialised retailing and trading establishments. Of the 116 services listed in table 15, 104 were available in Leicester compared with 94 in Loughborough and just over 60 in the other market towns. Additionally Leicester had specialised professional services such as those of opticians, architects, surveyors, etc. The comments made about Loughborough concerning its provision of specialised services apply with even greater strength to the situation at Leicester. With a town plus hinterland population of 104,000 - almost three times the population of Loughborough and its hinterland - the additional specialised institutions became practical economics.

But, of course, these were available for use not only for the 100,000 in the town and local hinterland but also for those sections of the population requiring them and living in the smaller market towns and their hinterlands. Prior consideration has been given to the position of Leicester as the centre of a wider hinterland stretching in each direction almost to the borders of the county.⁽¹⁾ It was over this area - embracing all of the six smaller market towns in the county - that the influence of the specialised shops in Leicester spread. In the mid-19th century, before the era of rapid rail communication, the high class retail establishments of Leicester would be to the 'County' families, what the shops of Bond Street and Oxford Street in London are to the aristocracy of to-day. And not only as far as retailing was this true. In the spheres of social activities, high judicial affairs, cultural life and the like Leicester was the centre to which the population of most of Leicestershire, interested in these matters, looked. It was reflected in the multiplicity of public buildings to be found there; buildings including the county hospital, the county jail, the Assembly Rooms, the museum, the theatre, the excise, permit, and stamp offices, etc; and reflected also in the various county functionaries living in the city - the clerk to the Commissioner of Taxes, the chief constable of the county police, the inspector of weights and measures for the county, the county Sherrieff and his assistants. In these matters Leicester's

(1) (See above. p. 225)

position amongst the market towns of the county was unique.

Additional to its functions as a supplier of goods and services to its hinterland, a market town, in the mid-19th century, also provided facilities for the disposal of surplus agricultural products of the countryside. In 1851 a town without a market was of very limited significance to the agricultural community. Marketing in Leicestershire was confined almost entirely to the seven towns that are under discussion in this chapter. Only Market Bosworth had marketing facilities, in addition to these seven towns, and these were of but little importance. At the beginning of the 19th century it had been recorded that the market was "almost in disuse"⁽ⁱ⁾ and in the 1830's it was specifically stated in an official report that the market was "not much frequented".⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Apart from

this small unimportant weekly market, annual fairs were held at certain other places - viz. Belton, Billesdon, Castle Donington, Hallaton, Husbands Bosworth, Mountsorrel and Waltham-on-theWolds - but contemporary press reports would suggest that these too were of little importance apart from the ones at Belton and Waltham.

Thus the field was left almost entirely clear for the seven market towns to provide what facilities were required by the farming fraternity. The facilities were reflected in the weekly market, the annual fairs and special sales, and in the

(i) (Nichols, J. History of Leicestershire. 1795. Vol.4.p.593)
(ii) (Bosworth Union Correspondence. Report of the Ass. Commissioner. 16th Jan. 1836. M.H.12. 6566)

provision of a corn exchange and similar buildings.

The weekly market was a feature of all the towns in the mid-19th century and contemporary evidence of their varying status is available from the directories and newspapers of the period. In Melton Mowbray, it was recorded:

"The market, held every Tuesday, is well supplied with corn, fat and lean stock, and all sorts of provisions."⁽ⁱ⁾

This generalisation was detailed to some extent in the local newspapers. For example, in 1859 the market was described in the following terms:

"We notice with satisfaction the gradual increase in extent and importance of our market; in the number of cattle of every description, in the quantity of grain and other articles offered for sale, and above all, in the number of purchasers for all classes of commodities, we are steadily progressing. Should we continue thus to go on steadily advancing we shall soon have a market second to none in the midland counties; indeed we believe there are few even now to be compared to it."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The newspaper was so impressed with the market that the following week it again commented on it:

"We note with pleasure the increased popularity of our market. The number of sheep shown on Tuesday was 4030."⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

At this period the market was still held in the streets and its popularity must have imposed something of a strain on the

(i) {White's Directory of Leicester and Rutland for 1863.p.357)
(ii) {The Melton Times. September 20th 1859.)
(iii) {ibid. September 27th 1859)

inhabitants of the town who lived in the narrow streets in which the market was held. (see Fig. 32).

At Loughborough too, the cattle and produce markets were held in the streets of the town. It was not until 1868 that Parliamentary powers were obtained to purchase the market rights from the lord of the manor so that the cattle market could be removed from the public thoroughfares.⁽ⁱ⁾ In 1861 it was mentioned that "the weekly market on Thursdays is well supplied with corn, cattle, and all sorts of provisions and on Saturdays there is a market for meat and vegetables."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ The special produce market on the Saturday must have been a recent innovation for there was certainly never a charter granted for it. It was, however, an indication of the growing importance of the trade of the town.

Similarly at Market Harborough, Hinckley, Lutterworth and Ashby-de-la-Zouch the weekly market was usually described as being "well supplied" and of importance to the life of the town.

By the middle of the 19th century, as we have already seen, Leicester was a city whose own population easily outnumbered that of the hinterland and it might, one would have thought, have been a place in which a rapidly expanding industrial function was driving out agricultural interests. This, however, was not the case. The growing industrial

(i) (Minutes of Evidence before the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls. Reply to question No. 15456. 1888)

(ii) (White's Directory. op.cit. p.)

population of the city needed feeding and before the era of rapid cross-country communications most of the food had to be grown in the immediate neighbourhood. Hence there was a demand for a produce market of considerable dimensions. In 1846, under the Town Improvement Act, the city of Leicester had secured the rights to improve the market place, and to provide a new cattle market and fair place. Under this Act over £25,000 was spent and by 1848 the improvements were under way. A contemporary directory records:

"The cattle market is being considerably enlarged; arrangements have been made to take down some very old buildings in the market place, thereby increasing the accommodation of that market."⁽ⁱ⁾

Less than a score of years later the city was to spend another £27,000 on building a new cattle market away from the centre of the city; £11,000 on an extension to the fish market, and £12,000 on improving access to the general market.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Such large scale expenditure, though motivated to some extent by the desire to clean up the centre of the city, also indicated the importance attached to the provision of adequate facilities for the markets of the city. The use made of the facilities is shown in the following description:

"Weekly markets are held on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The former is well supplied with cattle and the latter is an extensive mart for corn, provisions, and general merchandise,

(i) (Post Office Directory for 1848. London. p.2551)

(ii) (Evidence of the Town Clerk of Leicester to The Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls. op.cit. question 15935)

being numerously attended by farmers, dealers, gardeners, and others from the villages within a radius of 15 to 20 miles (an area rather more extensive than the determined local hinterland of the city)....

According to the corn inspector's returns, the quantities of various sorts of grains sold here in 1861 were -

wheat 25,136 qrs; barley 13,248 qrs; oats 5355 qrs; beans 2275 qrs; peas 267 qrs."⁽ⁱ⁾

The average weekly sale of 850 qrs. of wheat, barley and oats compares with a reported figure of 300 to 500 qrs. at the Hinckley market, indicating the difference between the use made of the two markets.

In the mid-nineteenth century the weekly markets formed only one outlet for the sale of non-perishable products of the countryside. The annual fairs remained of great importance for the disposal of livestock, cheeses, wool and the like. Evidence from the Leicester Journal of 1832 showed that each of the market towns had a large number of fairs each year. There were then 12 at Leicester, 9 at Loughborough, 8 at Hinckley, Market Harborough and Lutterworth, 6 at Melton Mowbray, and 5 at Ashby-de-la-Zouch. These numbers of fairs reflected 18th century conditions before the improvement of communications had made weekly markets for livestock a practical proposition. By 1850 there had been a reduction in the number of fairs actually being held. At Leicester, for example, it was recorded:

(i) (White's Directory of Leicestershire. op.cit. p.155)

"Twelve annual fairs were formerly held here, but five of them are now obsolete. The seven fairs now held in the town are for the sale of horses, cattle, sheep, etc. The May and October Fairs are also for the sale of cheese; and in June a wool fair is held at which about 30,000 fleeces are usually pitched."⁽ⁱ⁾

At each of the other market towns, with the exception of Melton Mowbray, there had been a decline of one or two in the number of fairs held annually. At Melton Mowbray, however, three new cattle fairs were established about 1853.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ The reversal of the general trend in the case of this town was partly a reflection of the relatively limited number of 18th century fairs held there, and partly evidence of the increasing popularity of the town as a marketing centre. Comments on the market at Melton have already been detailed; descriptions of the fairs were equally enthusiastic and optimistic. For example, in 1860, the report of the Lammas Fair read as follows:

"This fair was held here on Tuesday last, and as usual, the streets were well lined with beasts of all kinds; still the quantity was not too great for the buyers, as every train brought in many jobbers and purchasers."⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

Later in the same year appeared an item of news concerning the October Fair:

"This fair was held on Wednesday last and as usual beasts of all kinds were numerous, they extending throughout almost every street."^(iv)

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- (i) (White's Directory. op.cit. p.155)
 - (ii) (Drakes Directory of Leicestershire. 1861. p.308)
 - (iii) (The Melton Times. August 25th. 1860)
 - (iv) (ibid. October 27th. 1860)

These newspaper accounts of fairs in Melton could be matched by reports of other fairs in the same town and also by reports of the fairs in the other towns. From the reports it is possible to see the general importance of this type of sale but as the reports are isolated it is hardly possible to pick out general trends in the fortunes either of the fairs themselves or of the towns in which they were held. One point to note is that in many instances a fair was held on the recognised market day - viz: Tuesday in the case of Melton Mowbray - and thus it might be viewed merely as a seasonally important market. To declare the day a Fair Day would ensure that in September or October, for example, when fatted stock was to be sold off in large quantities from the pastures of south and east Leicestershire, ~~that~~ the dealers and buyers would know in which particular week of the period they might expect the greatest number of stock from which to choose; and, on the other hand, of course, the farmer would know when competition for his stock was likely to be the most keen amongst the buyers.

One final aspect of the seasonal fairs; one of them, towards the end of the year, was utilised as the hiring or statute fair. On that occasion the market town became the meeting place of the farmers seeking labourers and the labourers seeking employment for the following year. The contract between the farmer and the workers he selected, was made in the market place or in one of its nearby hostelries.

The concentration of this activity into the market towns following upon the improvement in communications is seen in a description of one held in Loughborough:

"The Loughborough winter fair, held on Thursday and Friday last, was quite equal, if not beyond, previous years both in the company attending and in the amount of business done. The cattle fair on Thursday was unusually well supplied....the horse fair too was larger than usual....The statutes for the hiring of servants was held on Friday and was never more numerously attended....Some years back the statutes at Sileby, Castle Donington and other places used to be well attended, but have lately fallen off, and Loughborough has consequently increased and now ranks as the most important statute in the neighbourhood."⁽ⁱ⁾

Thus far our attention has been concentrated on the local inter-change of goods and services between the market town and its hinterland. However, with a rising standard of living mirrored in an increasing demand for products not available locally, either from the craftsmen of the market towns or from the agriculturalists of the hinterland, the need for effective communication between all parts of the country had gradually developed. This need had been met by the use of the canals and the turnpikes up to the advent of

(i) (The Melton News. November 22nd. 1862)

the railways. The inter-change points between the local system of transport - viz: the carriers' carts - and the national transport system had been the market towns. It was on the market towns that the local transport systems had been oriented and thus they acted as the collecting points for the surplus produce and products of the hinterland despatching them on via waggons, coaches, and canal barges, which called at the towns, to other parts of the country and to the ports; and it was at the market towns that commodities needed in the locality would arrive in bulk, by road or canal, to be despatched in smaller quantities to all parts of the town's hinterland by carrier or on horseback. One example of this process of interchange between national and local systems of transport was seen in the choice of the market towns as the post towns for a district which often approximated in extent to the marketing hinterlands of the towns.

Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley, Melton Mowbray and Market Harborough all had canal connections directly into the towns but for Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Lutterworth the nearest wharves were several miles distant. It is, however, in the development of the system of turnpikes that the position of the market towns as interchange points can be most clearly seen. Fig. 16 shows the network of turnpike roads constructed by 1829, after which date no new ones were opened. In an earlier chapter the importance of the turnpikes in assisting the movement of local traffic has been ascertained.⁽ⁱ⁾ We may

(i) (See above. p. 136.)

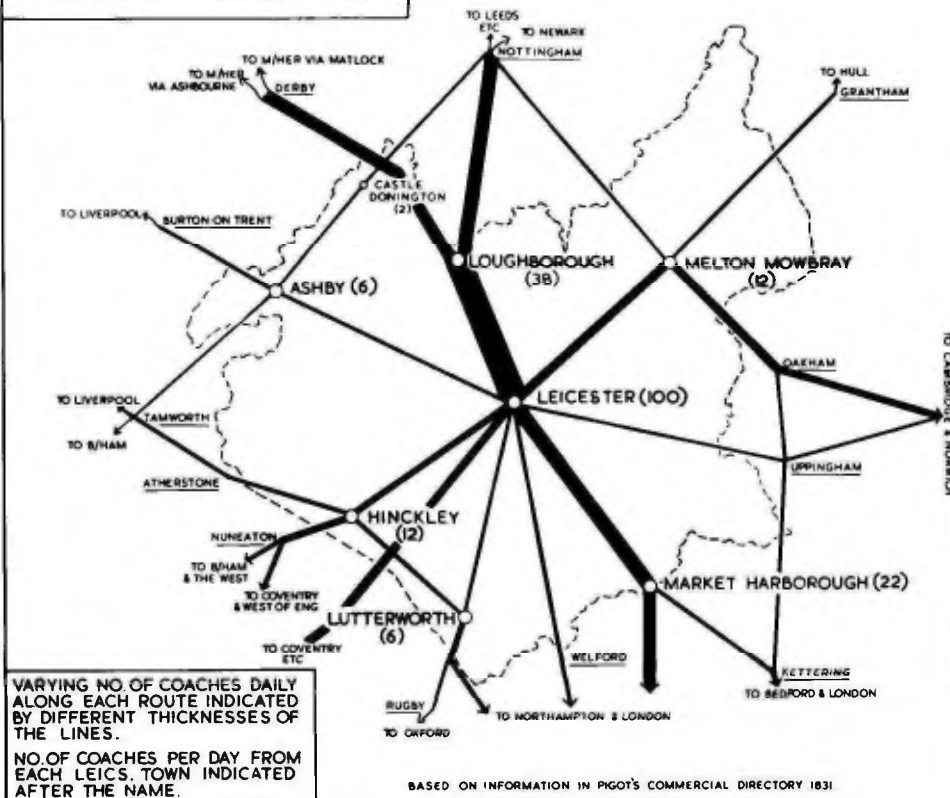
now look at the position of the market towns themselves on the turnpike system. In Leicestershire all the seven market towns were located at the junction of two or more turnpikes thus giving to each town the possibility of contact with its neighbouring towns and with other parts of the country. Passenger traffic facilities provide the common denominator by which the effectiveness of the transport facilities from the market towns may be examined. The first diagram on Fig, 33 shows the network of coaches which passed through the county in 1831 - that is, at the latest date before the beginning of the railway network in Leicestershire.

The most outstanding feature of the diagram - apart from the dominance of Leicester, about which more will be said a little later - was the fact that all the market towns in the county were served by coaches; that all had the choice of several routes passing through the town; and that all had direct communication with London which place would need to be most frequently visited by those of rank within the market town and its hinterland. Only Castle Donington, additional to the market towns, had the benefit of a coach service direct from the town.

Amongst the six smaller market towns of the county, Loughborough had by far the best facilities. Southwards 19 coaches were available to Leicester, 11 of them continuing to London via Northampton or Bedford, and others running directly to Birmingham, Coventry, and the west of England. Northwards,

LEICESTERSHIRE TOWNS IN THE NATIONAL TRANSPORT SYSTEM OF THE MID 19TH CENTURY

COACH ROUTES 1831



RAILWAYS & COACH ROUTES 1851

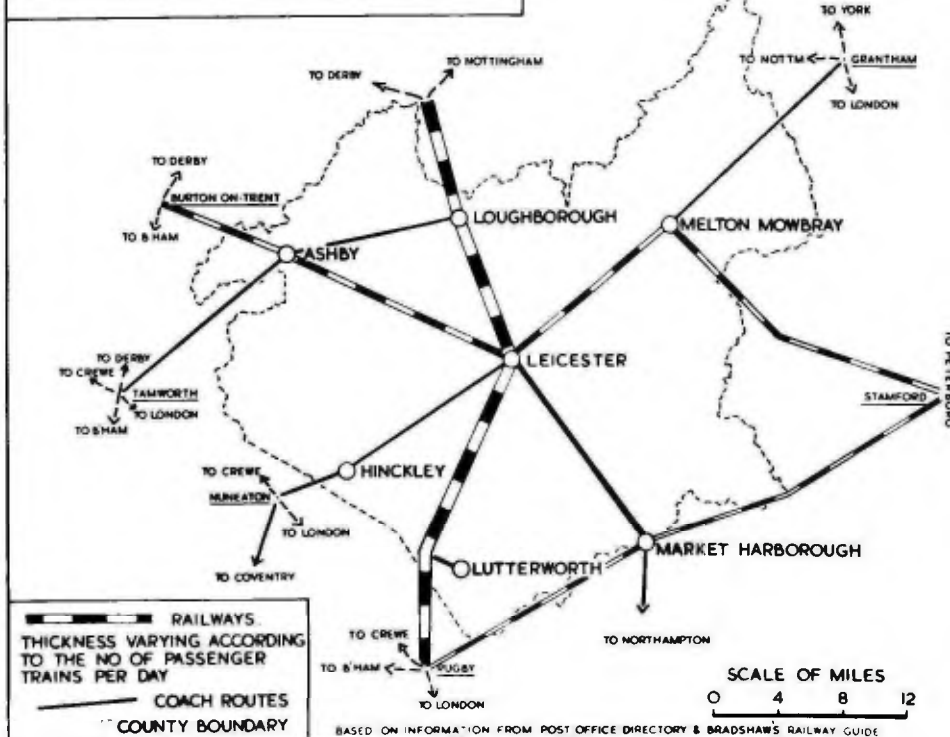


FIG 33.

9 coaches were available to Derby, seven of these going through to Manchester via Ashbourne or Matlock, and one through to Liverpool. 10 coaches were daily available to Nottingham and thence forward to a variety of destinations including Newark, Sheffield, Doncaster, Leeds, Huddersfield, and Bradford. Thus by direct coach from Loughborough many of the leading centres of the country could be reached.

Market Harborough also possessed the advantage of standing on the main London to Manchester road and facilities north and south were, therefore, very good. The town, however, lacked any east-west communication and a journey to Birmingham or Norwich involved changing at Leicester.

Melton Mowbray had rather fewer coaches daily, but the ones which did pass through the town served a variety of destinations. London was reached via Oakham and Kettering, and in the opposite direction there was a coach to Leeds via Nottingham and Sheffield. Westwards there were three coaches to Leicester, one of these continuing to Birmingham and another to Oxford via Northampton; to the north-east there was a direct coach to Hull via Grantham and to the south-east there were direct coaches to Cambridge, Norwich, and Stamford.

Hinckley and Lutterworth both stood on the post road between London and Holyhead and Liverpool and there were two daily coaches to London and one to each of the northern destinations. Additionally, from Hinckley, coaches ran westwards to Birmingham and Coventry and thence through to Bristol or Shrewsbury. Four coaches went to Leicester, three

of them going forward to Cambridge, Stamford and Nottingham.

At Lutterworth, on the other hand, additional coaches were only available to Oxford and Leicester.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch, like Lutterworth, had only six daily coaches; one each way on the royal mail route from Leicester to Burton; one to London via Leicester, Welford and Northampton; one to Liverpool via Stoke on Trent; and one each way between Nottingham and Birmingham.

Thus each of the smaller market towns offered some direct communication with the country at large but the choice of routes was restricted in the cases of Ashby, Lutterworth and Market Harborough, in particular. And indeed, whatever the smaller towns had to offer, the facilities from Leicester were so very much more comprehensive. All the coaches passing through the county with the exception of those on three routes, actually served the city of Leicester. There were no less than 100 coaches daily calling at Leicester utilising no fewer than 9 separate turnpikes out of the city and providing direct communication as far north as Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and Hull; as far east as Norwich and Cambridge; as far south as London and Oxford; and as far west as Bristol and Shrewsbury. In the pattern of stage coach services in the county Leicester was at the hub of the system with the other six market towns located out along the spokes of the network. Thus in this function too, Leicester was of rather greater importance than any other of the towns.

In a similar manner the market towns also provided interchange points for the distribution and collection of goods and commodities to and from the national arteries of transportation and the local hinterland. For example, in the hinterland of Melton Mowbray large quantities of stilton cheese were being produced on the farms, surplus to the needs of the population of the hinterland and of the town of Melton. This commodity, therefore, having been transported to Melton by one of the 54 market day carriers[†] was sold through an agency or in the market and then despatched by waggon along the turnpikes to one of the growing industrial areas.

Speaking of Melton, a contemporary directory reported:

"One of the staple articles of trade, at the present time, is the highly esteemed stilton cheese, which is made in the neighbourhood with in a circle of 10 miles, in large quantities and forwarded to every quarter of the globe."⁽ⁱ⁾

Quantities of cheese would also be forwarded from Loughborough and Leicester: towns which also had large cheese fairs at which was sold the produce of the local hinterlands. Another agricultural product marketed in a like manner was wool. Since the agricultural revolution Leicestershire had been especially important for its wool production, and wool fairs were held annually at Leicester and other of the market towns. At Leicester, in the mid 19th century 'about 30,000 fleeces were usually pitched.'⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (Pigot's Directory of Leicester and Rutland. 1841. p.47)
(ii) (White's Directory. op.cit. p.155)

The communications from Leicester to Yorkshire would need to be good to carry away such a large amount as quickly as possible.

But it was not only the agricultural products of the hinterland that the market towns had to receive and despatch to other parts of the country. The manufacture of hosiery on the hand-operated stocking-frame was still a feature of the industrial life of the county in the mid-nineteenth century.

"As the stocking frame could be worked by hand, the manufacture of hosiery was an industry that could be carried on at home, and it spread, therefore, over much of the county, and was not confined....to the towns.....Manufacturing life thus became blended with rural pursuits.....It was long before the application of steam to hosiery manufacture disturbed these conditions."⁽ⁱ⁾

It was, indeed, 1845 before the factory system was introduced into the hosiery industry and 1855 before steam power was applied. Because of this method of organisation in the principal industry of the county many of the villages in the hinterlands of Loughborough, Leicester and Hinckley had numerous cottage framework knitters earning their living by work 'put out' by agents in the towns. There was, therefore, a high degree of interdependence between town and village; it was from the town that the work and raw materials were obtained; it was in the town that the framesmith probably

(i) (Andrews. W. Bygone Leicestershire. London.1892. p.18)

lived; it was to the town that the finished work had to go in order to be stored and then despatched to other parts of the country. Thus, Hinckley, Leicester and Loughborough, in addition to fulfilling their own industrial activities, also acted as the clearing houses for the industries in the villages and thus needed external communications to maintain supplies of raw materials and to despatched the finished goods into the consuming areas. Their positions on the turnpikes was, therefore, of immense importance.

In considering country-wide communications we have looked only at the position of the towns in relation to road transport facilities. By the 1840's however, the spread of the railways had put a rather different complexion on the situation. By 1851 the network in Leicestershire was sufficiently dense to have driven most of the coaches off the roads. The second diagram on Fig. 33 shows the situation as it was at that date. In 1832 the first line in the county from Leicester to Swannington had been opened. In 1840 rail communication had been established between Leicester, Loughborough Nottingham and Derby, and Rugby. In 1846 the line from Leicester to Melton was opened and extended to Peterborough in 1848. In 1849 the Leicester and Swannington was extended to Burton-on-Trent, and in 1850 the Rugby, Market Harborough, and Stamford route was opened. On the periphery of the county the Trent Valley line from Rugby and Nuneaton to the north and the Derby and Birmingham railway had been completed by this date.

Road passenger facilities were now almost entirely limited to providing feeder services to the railway stations except in instances such as Leicester to Market Harborough or Leicester to Hinckley where road communications remained, because railways had not been opened. Communication between a town and the rest of the country came to depend on rail connections. A market town needed through express rail connection with larger centres in other parts of the country. In 1851 only Leicester and Loughborough had such facilities by means of expresses between London and the north making use of the Midland Counties Railway. Melton Mowbray, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and Market Harborough had rail communications but were located on branch lines - journeys^y to London necessitating a change at Leicester in the first two instances and at Rugby in the case of Market Harborough. In order to reach the north of England it was necessary to travel first by road to Leicester from Market Harborough; to Grantham or Syston from Melton Mowbray; and from Ashby it was necessary to change trains at Burton-on-Trent. Hinckley and Lutterworth were without rail links at this date; the former until 1862 and the latter until 1899. Both were dependent on road services to a rail head town. Newspaper comments of the period indicate the retarding influence that the lack of immediate rail connection in the 1840's and 1850's had upon a town's importance. For example, the Hinckley paper commented thus in one of its first numbers:

"give us but the first instalment of railway accommodation and we warrant that Hinckley will arise and assume her

proper and natural position amongst the towns of Leicestershire."⁽ⁱ⁾

Twenty years isolation from the principal transport network of the country had evidently had a stultifying effect on the activities of the town. Later in this thesis we shall examine the effect of the advantages of good rail communication to Nuneaton - just over the border in Warwickshire - at the expense of the town of Hinckley.

An immediate effect of its isolation from the national transport system is seen in the case of Lutterworth. Up to the opening of the London and Rugby railway in 1836 Lutterworth had been a post town on the royal mail coach route from London to Chester (see Fig. 2), and Rugby had received its mail by a side post from Dunchurch. When the railway came to be used for mail, however, the situation was reversed. Rugby became the post town and Lutterworth was served by a side post from there. In addition it lost much of its former postal hinterland in favour of the direct service which could be offered to the villages from Rugby. Here is a clear example of a centres' position on the national transport system affecting its functions as a central settlement. The decline of Lutterworth and the rise of Rugby as the principal service centre in this part of the county will be examined in more detail later in the thesis.

As at this date the railway network was incomplete, it

(i) (The Hinckley Journal. March 19th. 1859)

will not be discussed further at this juncture. Further consideration will be given to its effect on town-country relationships in the study of the situation at the beginning of the 20th century when the railways were at the peak of their importance.

There were factors concerning two of the towns at this period which had important bearings on their service facilities, etc. We have already seen how the development of industry had affected service provision in the cases of Leicester, Loughborough and Hinckley. In the case of Melton Mowbray, its position as the major centre of the 'Hunt' in the whole of the country affected the town's activities. Press reports and literary comment of the period eliminate any doubt as to the importance of this function of Melton Mowbray. The scope of the activity is revealed in a description given in a directory of 1829:

"Many houses in the town are furnished solely for these visitors (that is, the followers of the hunt) and some of the principal tradespeople let lodgings to them in the winter months; there is also stabling in the town for 500 horses."⁽ⁱ⁾

Stabling for 500 horses in a town with a population of only 4,000 indicates clearly the transformation that must have been wrought on the face of the town by this function. Its effect

(i) (Pigot's National Commercial Directory. 1829. p.501)

on the employment structure is seen in the employment of 5.5% of the adult males of the town as servants. This compares with an average of 1.6% for the county as a whole and an average for the market towns of 2.1% (see Table 14). Another publication makes the following comments:

"At no distant date, within at most 30 years, Melton Mowbray was an insignificant little town....but of late it has put on a very different appearance, owing to the numbers of comfortable houses which have been erected for the accommodation of its sporting visitors who now spend on an average, not less than £50,000 per annum on the spot."⁽ⁱ⁾

This stressed the two-fold influence of the centralisation of the 'hunt' in the town; firstly, the structural alterations which it brought about; and secondly, the increased business which it brought to the local tradespeople and craftsmen, and the town in general.

The combination of this business together with that arising from the town's position as the centre for a hinterland of some 17,000 people made mid-nineteenth century Melton a very prosperous trading settlement. Its population of over 4,300, when compared with the populations of less than 2,500 for the other market towns without industrial activities, was a good indication of its enhanced importance. The population of Melton had increased by 150% since the beginning of the 19th century - a larger proportionate increase than that for

(i) (Quoted from Apperley writing in 'The Chase' about 1830 - by Paget, Major G. The Melton Mowbray of J.Ferneley (1782 - 1860). Leicester 1931. p.22)

any other town in Leicestershire with the single exception of the county town - and much of this must have been the result of the development of the town as the hunting centre. (Indeed in the census of 1851, taken in the month of April, the returns must have included many in the town for the sporting season). The increases in population in the nineteenth century at Market Harborough and Lutterworth were 35% and 47% respectively.

Away on the western side of the county the early 19th century had seen attempts to develop the town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch into a 'Spa', after the discovery of saline waters in the neighbourhood. In 1831 it was written of the town:

"Few situations can boast of a more salubrious atmosphere. It fortunately confers the acknowledged benefits of sea bathing....in a very populous inland district.....it merely awaits for the impulse of fashionable patronage to give its valuable spring and elegant accommodation, that established celebrity they so pre-eminently deserve."⁽ⁱ⁾

Although the functions of the town as a watering place did not develop to the extent envisaged by this writer - perhaps because of the lack of communications between the withdrawal of the stage coaches in the 1830's and the opening of railway facilities in 1849, or because of the development of industrial

(i) (Curtis, Rev. J. Topographical History of Leicester. Leicester 1831. p.94.)

areas a few miles away to east and west - yet by the 1850's it had become a place of some repute as a spa and a 'saline bathing infirmary' was opened in 1854. A contemporary book referred to the town as :

"not having the aspect of a place of business, so much as that of a genteel and respectable town."⁽ⁱ⁾

A function of this type would, of course, have somewhat inflated the population of the town - viz: population in 1851 was 3,762 compared with 2,325 at Market Harborough - and have encouraged the establishment of a rather wider variety of traders than normally found in a central settlement - in 1851 there were in Ashby-de-la-Zouch specialist retailers such as a fruiterer and a game dealer. The type of population making use of the facilities would also provide a market for high class dairy and market garden produce of the hinterland.

Ashby's function as a spa was not so important to the town, however, as were Melton's interests in the 'hunt', and it was clearly subsidiary to the function of Ashby as a central settlement for a hinterland of some 17,000 people.

Finally, we may briefly examine the effect of mid 19th century trading and marketing functions on the morphology of the central settlements. The most important effect - and one which was not peculiar to this period, but dating from the time when the settlement first assumed such functions - was that provision had to be made for the buying and selling which took

(i) (anon. A History and Description of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Ashby. 1852. p.119)

place in the town. As previously indicated, in the mid-19th century, the livestock and the provision markets were still held in the streets to a very great extent in all the market towns in Leicestershire and thus there was a need for a central open space in which they could be held. Fig. 32 indicates the situation in two of the central towns at this period. At Market Harborough the widened High Street provided room for a cattle market, a sheep market, and a provision market around the church and the grammar school. In Melton Mowbray the market place was smaller but Back Street, Nottingham street, Sherrard street, and King street, were used as trading places in addition. It was in these streets that the livestock stood, whilst the market place itself was used by the farmers selling their vegetables and dairy produce, etc. At each of the other five market towns in the county similar open spaces were available and it has already been pointed out that the city of Leicester spent £25,000 in the 1850's in order to secure additional facilities.⁽ⁱ⁾

In some instances special buildings were provided at this period as corn exchanges and/or as provision markets. In Melton Mowbray, a corn exchange was built by the Trustees of the Town Estate in the 1850's and opened in 1858; in 1856 a combined corn exchange and town hall was opened in Loughborough; 1858 saw the opening of a corn exchange at Market Harborough, where at this time the ground floor of the

(i) (see above. p.249)

Town Hall was being used as the butchers shambles and the open space beneath the Grammar school as the butter market. At Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in 1837, a town hall and market house had been built, this being used both as a corn exchange and as a provision market. In 1836, a Town Hall and a market place had been erected in Lutterworth. This was described as follows:

"The bottom portion consists of two rooms, of which one is used as a corn exchange and the other for a market house for the sale of poultry, butter, and eggs, etc."⁽ⁱ⁾

The fact that a town undertook marketing facilities led to an increase in the number of inns and hostelries. In 1849 the number of important hostelries in the six smaller market towns of the county ranged from 15 at Lutterworth to 44 at Loughborough.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Their location in the towns of Melton and Market Harborough is shown on Fig. 32. In addition to providing food, drink, and lodgings they were also the venues of buyers and sellers for finalising deals made in the market and they were also the starting point of the carriers' carts journeying back to the villages. Thus the demand for their services was almost universal amongst the visitors to the market towns and this accounted for their prominent situations in the morphology of the central parts of the settlements.

The administrative functions of the central towns also necessitated various buildings. At Lutterworth the magistrates met in the Town Hall but, as seen on Fig. 32, at Melton they

(i) (Bottrill F.W. Handbrook of Lutterworth. Lutterworth 1891.
p.11)

(ii) (Hagar's Directory of the County of Leicester. 1849)

had their own headquarters. Also at Melton were the Union workhouse - a feature common to all the market towns in the county, and a post office, similarly available in each town.

The remainder of the commercial and professional facilities which the towns offered at this period were located along the main streets of the town. In the case of Melton along those streets which are named in the diagram. The appearance of these main streets of the market towns would resemble, to a greater or a lesser extent, that of the market place at Ashby shown in the photograph opposite.



ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH—MARKET PLACE IN 1827

SECTION THREE.

URBAN SPHERES OF INFLUENCE AT THE BEGINNING
OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

CHAPTER ONE.CHANGING CONDITIONS SINCE THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY.

In the latter half of the 19th century two main factors were responsible for changes in the relationships between town and country. The first of these was the development of the railways; and the second, the great increase in the population of the county as a result of accelerated industrialisation.

In 1851, the framework of the railway system in Leicestershire had been completed and had already resulted in the virtual disappearance of long distance road traffic.⁽ⁱ⁾

In 1899, the last railway line to be built through the county was opened to traffic. This was the London extension of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire railway, and in Leicestershire it served Loughborough, Leicester and Lutterworth. Fig. 34 shows the railway network at this date. There is no doubt that at this period the railways were of importance in handling local as well as national traffic. The number of villages served by rail may have been small compared with the total number in the county but, nevertheless, for considerable areas the railways provided a rapid and constant means of communication with the market town. The improved facilities which they brought were pinpointed by one of the witnesses appearing before a Parliamentary committee. Replying to a question concerning the meeting day of a Poor Law Union's Board of Guardians he said:

(i) (See above. p. 260)

LEICESTERSHIRE: RAILWAY NETWORK IN 1900

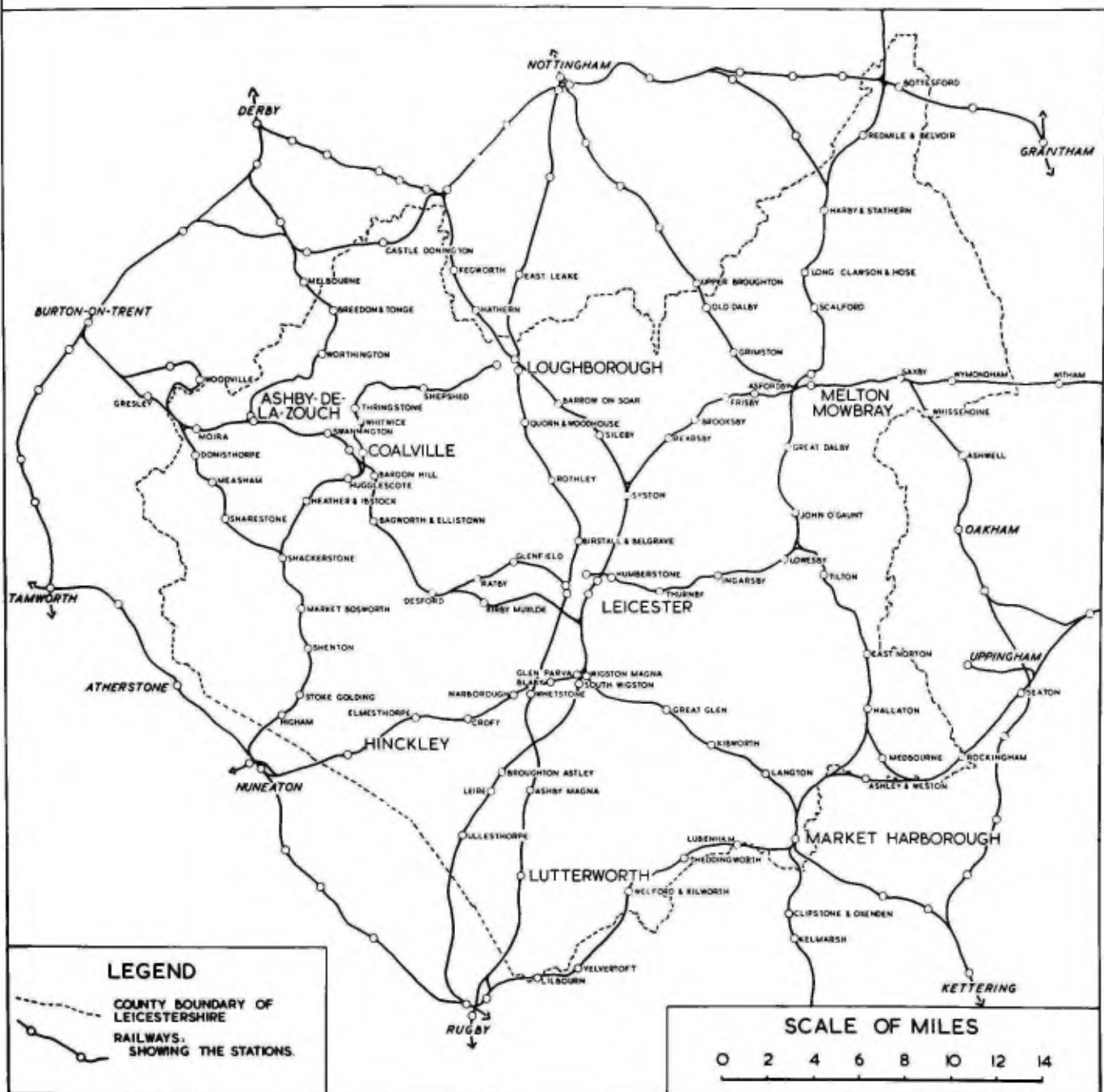


FIG. 34.

"In 1833, when the unions were formed, before there was railway communication, some importance might be attached to market days when people came from a considerable distance, but now they can go in a $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour a distance which formerly took them two hours to travel."(i)

The facilities of rail communication available to a town at this period, therefore, had an important influence on the town's hinterland and, as will be examined later, lack of local rail communication resulted in a town's decline as a service centre.

Increasing population and industrialisation continued throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Between 1851 and 1901 the population of the county increased from 230,000 to 430,000 - an increase not far short of 100% in only 50 years. Within the picture for the county as a whole, however, even more significant changes had occurred in the process of urbanisation. Most of the towns already in existence in 1851 experienced rapid growth. From a population of 60,000 Leicester expanded to a size of over 200,000; Loughborough more than doubled in size from under 11,000 to 22,000; Hinckley's population increased from 6,000 to 11,000. Elsewhere in the county the parish of Coalville with a 1,500 population in 1851 had become a town of over 7,000 people by 1900, and the seat of an urban district with a population of over 15,000. Wigston Magna, a railway junction and industrial centre to the south of Leicester, increased in population from 2441 to 8404, in the same period of 50 years.

(i) (Evidence of A. Doyle, Inspector of the L.G.B. before the Parliamentary Select Committee of County, Union & parish boundaries. 1873. Question No. 742)

The first result of industrialisation and expansion of the towns, on the relationships between town and country, was to diminish the percentage of the trade of the town arising from its contacts with a hinterland. This was seen in the middle of the nineteenth century as far as three of the towns were concerned; it had become a much more pronounced feature by the end of the century when, for example, the population of Leicester was almost equivalent to the population of the remainder of the county.

Industrialisation and expanding population was not, however, confined to the towns of the county. The process of rural industrialisation, also seen in earlier periods, continued through the latter half of the 19th century. Many villages in this period had increases in population ranging from 40 to 60%. As shown in Fig. 35, many of these villages had densities of population exceeding 320 per square mile and others had more than 640 per square mile. In the Soar valley, Mountsorrel, Sileby and Syston all showed this higher density. South and west of Leicester, Narborough, Enderby, Wigston Magna, etc. had similar densities of population.

Where the population of the hinterland of a town was expanding it would seem that this would lead to a greater degree of exchange between the central settlement and the villages. This, however, was not necessarily true for one of the results of an expanding village population was an extension in the degree of service provision which they were able to offer. Within the large villages, with populations up to 3,000, the

LEICESTERSHIRE: DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION 1901

A - ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH
H HINCKLEY
LE LEICESTER
LO - LOUGHBOROUGH
LU - LUTTERWORTH
MH - MARKET HARBOROUGH
MM - MELTON MOWBRAY
CV - COALVILLE

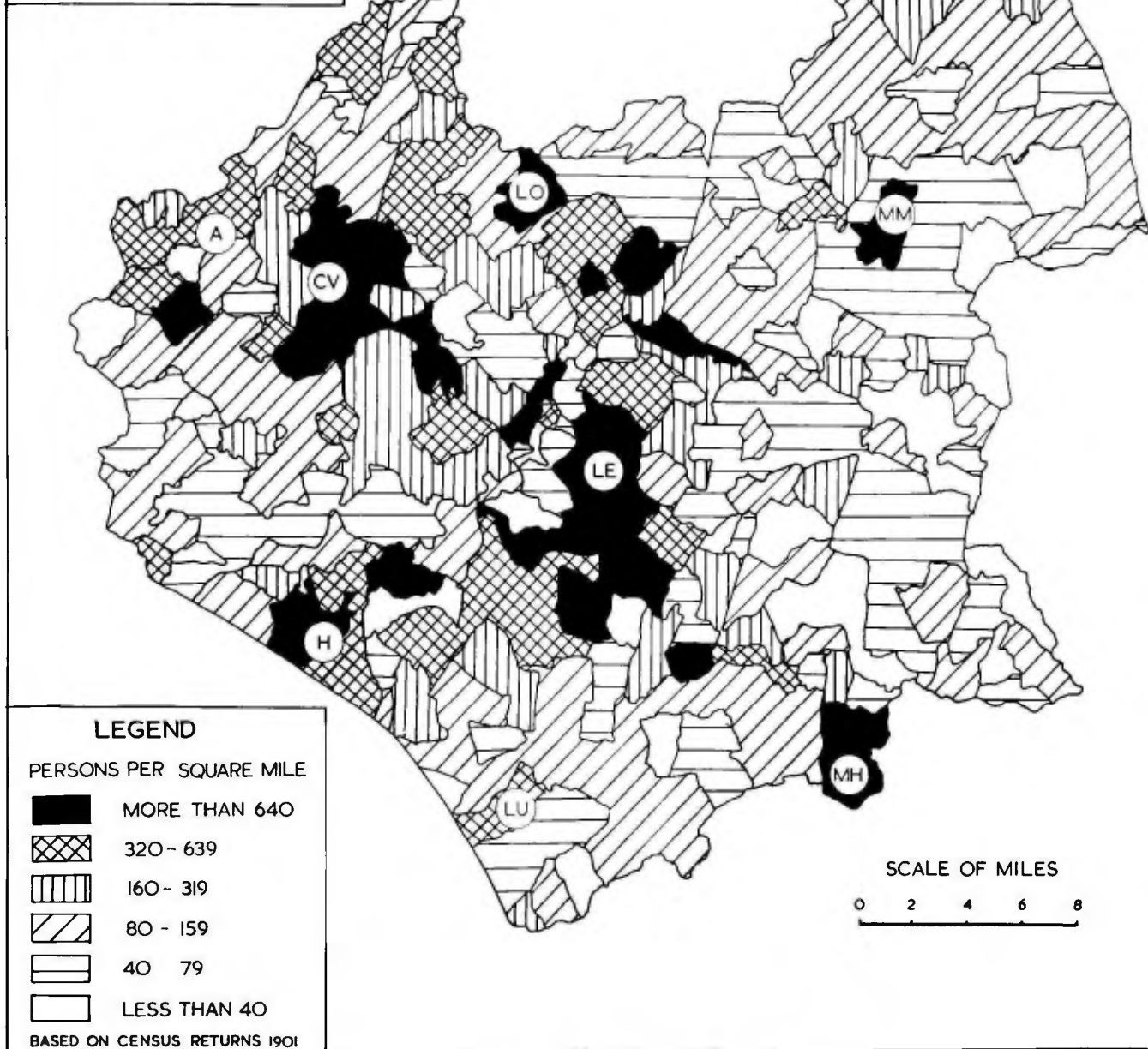


FIG. 35.

most common and important needs of the population could be met by the traders and craftsmen who now found it possible to settle there, because there were sufficient customers to provide them with a living. Such local service provision could have the effect of weakening the links with the market town. The industrial proletariat of these villages, forming the large bulk of their populations, would have no need of the more specialised services of the market towns, such as the banks, the professional services, the high class shops, etc. The absence of a real need to visit the market town would also be supplemented by the impossibility of doing so, except on special occasions, because of the lack of time outside working hours, and the absence of surplus spending power over and above that needed to provide for the necessities of life, which could be purchased locally, or from an itinerant tradesman.

Hence, concurrent with the declining relative importance of the country trade to the central towns themselves, we can also see that industrialisation of the hinterland would result in a declining significance of the market towns as centres of service provision. The relative importance of the changes which had taken place in the distribution of service provision in Leicestershire will be examined in detail in a later chapter. At this stage, however, it should be made perfectly clear that the regional differences in the county, which had been noted in the mid-century analyses, had become greatly accentuated. The towns and hinterlands of Leicester, Loughborough and

Hinckley had become even more industrialised, but in contrast, as Fig. 35 shows, in east, south and south-west Leicestershire, industry had affected to but a very small degree the hinterlands of Melton, Market Harborough, and Lutterworth, which towns, therefore, still retained their characteristics as agricultural centres. In the hinterland of Melton, for example, there was but one place with a population of over 1,000 (viz: Asfordby, location of a recently opened iron and steel plant), and only five others with populations exceeding 500.

In the mid-19th century the important relationships between a town and its hinterland were seen to arise from the centralisation of marketing facilities in the town, and the town's provision of a variety of administrative and associated services. The pattern of the relationships remained basically the same at the end of the century, in spite of the development of communications and of industry. Evidence detailing the position of the markets in 1900 will be later examined together with that concerning the position of the market towns in providing administrative services, after the major local government reforms of 1888 and 1894.

The development of the railways had, however, tended to weaken the influence of the market towns as interchange points between the local and the national systems of transport. As far as the receipt and forwarding of goods by a settlement were concerned, it was no longer automatically through the market town that the transaction was handled, unless the nearest railway station also happened to be located there. Each railway station

had become the point of transfer between national and local means of transport, and as these were found in village as well as in the market town the dependence on the latter had been lessened to some extent. Each village station served its neighbouring settlements, and only places some considerable distance from a village station would be entirely dependent on local road transport to and from the market town. This, of course, was true also of passenger traffic. In 1831, the village doctor needing to visit London, for example, first took a post-chaise to the market centre where at one of the principal inns a connection could be made with one of the scheduled coach services to the metropolis. Following the development of the railways, however, a journey between the same points would involve boarding a local train at the village station, and from this making a connection with an express at the nearest main line station. This may or may not have been located in the market town but, in any case, as the transfer from the one train to the other involved but a change of platform and a wait of probably but a few minutes, it was of but little significance, as no question of patronising a local hostelry arose.

It is not implied in the preceding comments that the market towns had entirely lost their significance as interchange points, for, as previously pointed out, the railways served but a minority of the villages even when the system was completed. Many of the remainder would continue to rely on local road transport to the market town in order to secure effective communication with the rest of the country. Neither is it

implied that no significance could be attached to the town's function as a main line railway junction. Good, express train services from a market town to various parts of the country were certainly an attraction to professional workers in the town, and they would, of course, also stimulate industries based perhaps on the products of the hinterland of the town. For example, at the beginning of the 19th century both Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Burton-on-Trent were renowned for their ale. In each case the brewing industry was dependent on malt made from locally grown barley, and adequate supplies of suitable water. During the 19th century these advantages remained, but while Burton leapt ahead as the centre of the brewing industry that at Ashby died out. An important contributory reason must have been the difference in the national communications available to either town. In the canal era Burton, standing on the navigable Trent and having canal communication to the west, had an early advantage over Ashby, located several miles away from the nearest canal, for importing additional supplies of raw materials and exporting the finished product. Later, however, and even more important, Burton had railway communication as early as 1839 whilst Ashby had to wait for another 10 years for its first railway; moreover, as the century progressed Burton secured the advantages of main line connection, and local links in three other directions, whereas the main line through Ashby became but a branch line from Leicester to Burton, and of much less significance to an industry needing good connections to

all parts of the country.

Additionally, the fact that a town was a railway junction stimulated development. Nationally one looks automatically to Crewe or Swindon for examples of this, but in Leicestershire the changing fortunes of Rugby and Lutterworth - 8 miles apart - in the 19th century were a reflection of the values of rail transport. Lutterworth, without rail connection until 1899, remained static, and it lost its formerly important stock market. Rugby, on a railway by 1837; a junction by 1840; and the hub of nine lines by 1900, experienced rapid expansion due, in the first place, to the establishment of railway works and depots in the town; secondly, to the industry which was located there by virtue of the good rail communications; and thirdly, to its development as an important agricultural centre especially for the marketing of beasts. The stock yards were developed adjacent to the railways which afforded a rapid means of communication for distribution of the stock after sale. By the 1920's it had become one of the leading cattle market towns in the midlands - a growth directly attributable to the railway facilities which were available from the town.

One might have anticipated that the development of a rapid means of communication, and the growth of industrial opportunities in the towns would have resulted in a significant movement between town and hinterland arising from the division of place of work and the place of residence. No direct evidence of such a phenomenon is available until 1921, when the situation

was surveyed in the census returns for that year. It had, by then, assumed quite large proportions, more than 10,000 workers daily making the journey into Leicester, almost 3,000 into Loughborough, and over 1,600 into the town of Hinckley. However it was likely that the development of motor transport by that date, and the changes in the industrial structure brought about by the Great War had caused an inflation of such movements within the previous few years.

Indirect evidence for the turn of the century suggests that such a relationship between town and hinterland was not of great importance. In the introduction to this thesis was mentioned the evidence of a ^{iden}result of the village of Nailstone, who at this period had to go to Leicester to find work, but owing to difficulties in communication with the city - the nearest railway station being several miles distant - also lived there, visiting her home village about once in every twelve months.

A newspaper report of 1900 suggests that in the case of Loughborough, the second town in the county, with an industrial population of about 5,000, that there was little movement of workers into the town. A resident of Quorn, a village two miles from the town, giving evidence before a public enquiry into a proposed light railway between Hathern, Loughborough, Quorn, and Mountsorrel, said:

"....the evidence of direct need (for the railway) was almost insignificant and certainly very slight in character. There is practically no passage of persons for employment backwards and forwards to Loughborough; therefore it could

not be for persons of Quorn that improved communication was wanted with Loughborough. Then it was admitted that nearly all the persons at Mountsorrel (5 miles from Loughborough) were employed at the granite works there so there was no necessity for improved facilities between Mountsorrel and Loughborough. The only regular traffic was on Thursdays and Saturdays, market days.....If there was a real and effective need it was curious that some enterprising gentlemen had not thought of running motor buses between Loughborough and Mountsorrel."(i)

Even a witness who spoke in favour of the railway only said that "it would be of benefit to those people who did their shopping in Loughborough".(ii)

Although it would be most incorrect to assume from this single item of evidence that there was no flow of workers into Loughborough at this date, yet it does show that even from villages within a mile or so of the town - and, moreover, villages with railway connection to Loughborough, Quorn having a station on the Great Central line, - that there had been no development of the daily journey to work.

It was most probably only in the exceptional case of Leicester, around which city there was a ring of suburban stations on the ten lines leading into it (see Fig. 34), that the

(i) (Loughborough Herald and North Leicestershire Gazette. Report of Public Enquiry. March 22nd. 1900)

(ii) (ibid.)

daily traffic was of any importance. From the three stations at Wigston there were a total of 5 early morning trains into Leicester; from Syston there were three; from Desford, Ashby Magna, and Whetstone there were two; and from the remainder, one. Population increase in some of these settlements, a feature which we have already noted, was due in part to their functions as dormitory centres as well as to the local development of industry.

At the beginning of the 20th century, therefore, the relationship between a market town and its hinterland was still reflected basically in a weekly exchange of men and materials, rather than by a daily pattern of transfer. Social contacts between the town and its hinterland were but immaturely developed, with the exception that the weekly newspapers, whose foundation had been noted in the middle of the nineteenth century, were well established as a means by which country and town could maintain effective communication with each other. Some social and cultural groupings etc. had become oriented around the central towns - for example, sports leagues, and voluntary organisations - but their significance was not very great.

In the examination of town-country relations at this period we shall, therefore, be mainly concerned with an assessment of the provision of trading, servicing and professional facilities noticing especially the comparisons and contrasts with earlier studies. A detailed survey of the market towns

will be made and justification given for again making them the choice as the central units in the regional division of the county into functional hinterlands.

CHAPTER TWO.SERVICE PROVISION IN 1900.

For 1851 a detailed examination was made of the distribution of service provision throughout Leicestershire. 21 key services - including representatives of the professions, the retailing establishments, and the craft industries related to the local market - were taken to indicate the relative importance of each and every settlement in the urban hierarchy. For each settlement two indices were determined; the first, the index of service provision, based on an examination of the number of each of the 21 services that the settlement provided; and the second, the index of concentration of service facilities, based on the relationship of the former index to the population of the settlement.

Basically the method of analysis for 1900 is the same. The method of analysing the information is similar and again for each settlement the two indices have been determined. The major difference - which unfortunately makes direct comparisons between the situations at the two dates impossible - arises from the differing source of the information. For 1851, the individual enumerators' returns in the census of that year were available. For 1900, in the absence of any official returns, resort has been made to the commercial directories which, in the latter half of the 19th century, had become valuable sources of information concerning the contemporary economic and social life

of the nation. In this particular survey two directories have been used; Wright's Directory of the City of Leicester for 1900, and Wright's Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland, also for 1900.⁽ⁱ⁾ For each settlement a list of professional people, retailers, and craftsmen, etc. was included and thus it has been possible to determine the selection and number of 22 key services available at each settlement.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Possession of each key service resulted in a specific number of points being scored to the settlement and the Index of Service Provision has been determined by totalling all the points thus scored to the settlement.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

The analysis revealed that 155 of the 330 (approx.) nucleated settlements in the county did not possess any of the 22 services whose distribution was examined. As these 22

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- (i) (Available in the local collection of the Leicester City Reference Library. Wright's Directories of Leics. were the forerunners of those of Kelly's and their accuracy was on a par with those of the latter firm)
 - (ii) (The 22 key services are identical with those selected for 1851 with the addition of 'book-sellers and stationers.' Reasons for the choice of these specific services were given in the analysis of 1851. See above p. 121)
 - (iii) (The method was identical with that for 1851 but owing to the changes in the total number of units of each service facility in the county as a whole, the number of points awarded for the possession of a particular service was not necessarily the same as that at the earlier date. For example, in 1851, 591 grocers in the county were worth one-third of a point; in 1900, the Directories only revealed 203 grocers and they were worth $\frac{1}{2}$ point each. In 1851, there were 36 auctioneers in the county - each scored two points; in 1900 there were 103 and the points awarded to each were reduced to $1\frac{1}{2}$. The reader is again referred to p. 121 and to Appendix 1 for a full discussion of method utilised in this analysis. Details of the points awarded for each of the 22 services in 1900 are shown in table 16.)

included such neighbourhood services as boot and shoe repairers and general stores selling items of food (designated grocers in the survey), it would seem that these 155 places can, on the whole, be labelled as "devoid of service provision". Another 135 settlements were of little significance in their contribution to the pattern of distribution of service provision. Between them they contributed but 10% of the county total (see ^{Table} ~~Fig.~~ 17) of service provision. They possessed only from one to a maximum of five of the 22 services: almost half of them - viz: 58 - had but one, 32 with only two; 24 with three; 9 with four, and a dozen with five different services. Between them they had a total of 290 services, and by far the overwhelming majority of these were the neighbourhood services of grocer, draper, boot and shoe repairer, and tailor, all of which could find adequate custom in a village of 200 to 300 inhabitants. These four services accounted for 244 out of the 290, the remaining 46 including anomalies such as auctioneers - who, no doubt, resided in a village (e.g. Nailstone) whilst having his business in a nearby market town (in this case, Market Bosworth); or by certain villages being the residence of itinerant traders (e.g. Ironmongers - found in ten of these settlements); or the specific instance of Doctors who were located in certain key villages to serve those areas some distance from the market towns. A doctor was located in 9 of the 12 settlements which had five services, and they included places such as Wymondham, Long Clawson, and Hallaton which had been determined as subsidiary centres, lying midway between the market towns, in 1851. During

the latter part of the 19th century they had lost some of their former importance as retailing centres. This may perhaps be related to the easier means of communication with the market towns resulting from the development of the railways and the improvement of the roads.

Thus 290 settlements in the county were of little or no significance in the urban hierarchy of 1900. Remaining were 42 settlements which jointly offered some 90% of the service provision of the county. These are shown on Fig. 36 and further details concerning them given in table 16. The principal feature of the picture of their distribution is the dominating position occupied by the city of Leicester. With an index of S.P. of 2070 it possessed more than 60% of the services offered by the 42 settlements and 54% of the total for the county. (see table 17). Each of the 22 services were available in considerable numbers, for example - 252 tailors; 28 furniture dealers; 32 auctioneers; 86 doctors. Such a high degree of provision of these and other services was mainly a reflection of the large locally resident population numbering over 211,000; but while service provision in the city was 53.9% of the total for the county, the city's population was but 48.4% of the county total - this significant difference of over 5% between the figures, measuring the function of Leicester as a central settlement.

The second feature of the distribution was the enhanced degree of S.P. provided by the other six market towns of Ashby,

Table 16

Table detailing Population and Service Provision etc. of the settlements shown on Fig.36 (Service Centres 1900)				
Settlement	Population	Index of Service Provision	No. of Services (max.22)	Index of Conc. of Service Facility ^o
Total for the County	437,490	3841	-	8.7
Leicester	211,579	2070	22	9.8
Loughborough	21,382	242	22	11.3
Melton Mowbray	7,454	123	21	16.4
Hinckley	11,304	110	21	10.0
Market H'borough	6,435	105	21	16.3
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	4,726	93	21	19.9
Coalville	7,157	74	17	10.3
Lutterworth	1,734	53	18	30.5
Shepshed	5,293	51	16	9.6
x South Wigston	-	39	15	-
Castle Donington	2,514	36	13	14.1
Kegworth	2,078	32	14	15.4
Ibstock	3,922	32	13	-
Whitwick	3,720	26	11	-
x Wigston Magna	-	25	10	-
Earl Shilton	3,595	24	11	-
Measham	2,075	22	10	10.3
Syston	2,930	20	9	-
Mountsorrel	2,417	19	8	8.9
Market Bosworth	659	17	11	25.8
Bottesford	1,221	17	10	13.5
Barwell	2,727	17	10	-
Anstey	2,544	16	8	-
Kibworth	1,665	14	8	-
Sileby	2,752	14	8	-
Quorn	2,173	12	7	-
Markfield	1,632	10	8	-
Billesdon	726	9.5	7	13.1
Blaby	1,842	9.5	8	-
+ Hugglescote	-	9.5	8	-
Enderby	2,638	9.5	6	-
Burbage	2,196	9.0	6	-
Husbands Bosworth	741	8.5	7	10.1
Barrow on Soar	2,409	8.0	7	-
Flechnay	1,516	8.0	6	-
Countesthorpe	1,429	7.0	7	-
+ Ellistown	-	7.0	6	-
Oadby	1,890	7.0	6	-
Somerby	503	6.5	6	11.9
Appleby Magna	649	6.5	6	10.0
Narborough	902	6.5	6	-
Thringstone	1,238	5.5	6	-
Total for these 42 ¹ Settlements	348,499	3421	-	-

x Pop. of these settlements not shown separately in the Census Returns: Wigston's Total Pop. 8404.

+ Pop. of Hugglescote and Ellistown also shown together: Total Pop. 4404.

o In this column the Index of Conc. of Service Facility only shown for those settlements where the Index is higher than the County Average of 8.7.

Table 17

Table showing the relationship between Service Provision and Population in groups of settlements in Leicestershire 1901						
Settlement or group of Settlements	No. of places in the group	Group's Total Service Provision	Total S.P. as a percentage of County Total	Total pop. of the group.	Total pop. as a percentage of County Total	Average no. of the 22 services in each settlement in the group
Leicester	1	2070	53.9	211,579	48.4	22
Market Towns	6	726	18.9	54,461	12.5	20.7
Other Service Centres (shown on Fig. 3b)	35	625	16.3	82,459	18.9	9.4
Other Settlements also showing some Index of Service Provision	135	420	10.9	66,662	15.2	1.4
Remainder of Settlements	155	-	-	22,329	5.1	-

Hinckley, Loughborough, Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray. As shown in table 17, their total indices of S.P. amounted to 726, forming about 20% of the county total. (Service Provision in Leicester and the market towns amounted to almost 75% of the total for the county). With the exception of Lutterworth, all the towns provided 21 or 22 of the 22 services. In a more detailed examination of 50 service facilities it was revealed that each of these towns - again with the exception of Lutterworth - offered at least 45 of them, and that in the case of Loughborough, all of them were available; at Melton, all but one; and at Market Harborough all but two. Had these more specialised functions (for example, cabinet makers and upholsterers, corn and flour dealers, furniture dealers, etc.) been included in those from which the Index of S.P. was determined, then the position of these settlements relative to the other towns would have been even more dominant.

There was a considerable variation in the amount of service provision available in the other 35 settlements shown on Fig. 36. The minimum qualification for inclusion as a service centre was the possession of at least one quarter of the 22 services examined. Several settlements only just achieved this minimum qualification, with but 6 services and indices of S.P. ranging from 5.5 to 7.0. There were other places many more times important. Coalville, for example, had 17 of the services - only one less than Lutterworth - and an

LEICESTERSHIRE: SERVICE CENTRES 1900

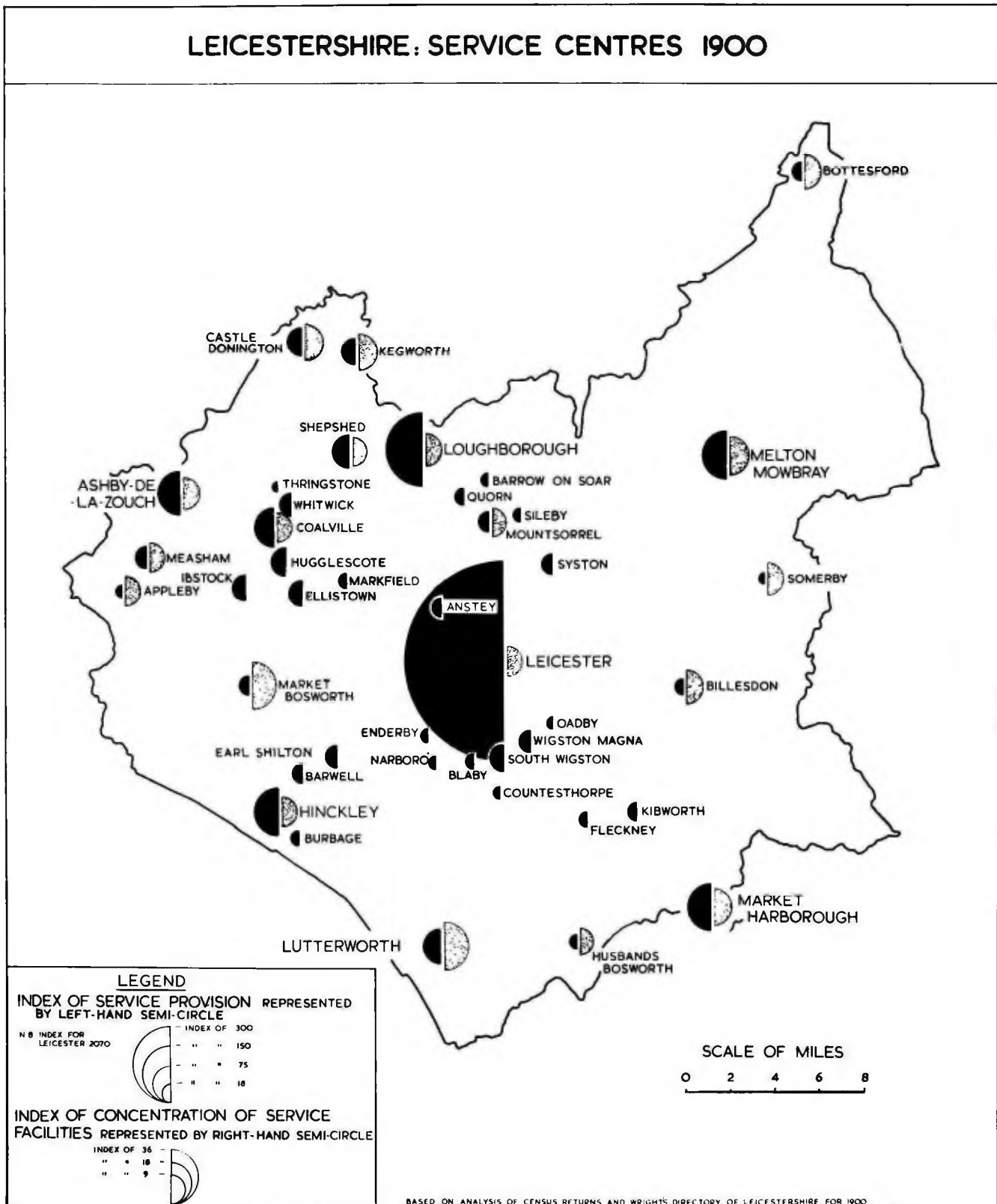


FIG. 36.

index of 74.0; an index considerably in excess of that for Lutterworth and almost equivalent of that of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. There were 8 other settlements providing at least half of the services, ranging from Shepshed with an index of 51.0 to Earl Shilton (24.0), and Market Bosworth (17.0). In total, the 35 settlements supplied 624 points of service provision - a figure only one-seventh less than that for the market towns.

A comparison of service provision in these three groups of settlements in 1851 and in 1900 might now be made. At the beginning of this chapter it was pointed out that, owing to the different sources of information utilised at the two dates, that it was impossible to make direct comparisons. It is, therefore, necessary to relate the status of the groups to the situation in the county as a whole at each of the two dates and make a comparison on a percentage basis.

For each group of settlements at both the dates the ratio of service provision to the population is expressed as a percentage, and the results set out in table 18. They are a measure of the degree of centralisation of service provision in each of the groups of settlements. In 1851, the ratios for both Leicester and the market towns were both considerably in excess of 100% showing that these groups of towns had a greater degree of service provision than their local populations would warrant. By 1900 their ratios had decreased: by 11% in the case of Leicester, and by no less than 39% in the case of the other six market towns. Such

Table 18

Table showing differences in the relationship of Service Provision to Population in groups of settlements in Leicestershire : 1900 and 1851						
Settlement or group of Settlements	1900		1851		Ratio of S.P. to Population expressed on a percentage	
	Percentage of total pop. of County in this group	Percentage of total SP in County in this group.	Percentage of total pop. of County in this group	Percentage of total S.P. in County in this group	Ratio of S.P. to Population expressed on a percentage	Ratio of S.P. to Population expressed on a percentage
1. Leicoster	48.4	53.9	26.3	33.9	111.4	125.1
2. Market Towns	12.5	18.9	13.4	33.5	151.2	250.0
3. Other Service Centres of 1900 (see Fig.)	18.9	16.3	21.6	16.6	86.2	76.8
4. Remainder of Settlements	20.2	10.9	38.7	16.0	54.0	41.2

decreases confirm the theoretical arguments set forth in the introduction to this section,⁽ⁱ⁾ that, with the development of large urban villages, there would have been a relative migration of some aspects of service provision into these smaller settlements on the attraction of greater contact thereby achieved with the consumer. For example, a grocer in a market town could make deliveries to his customers in a large industrial village but he was at a disadvantage both as far as service and costs of distribution were concerned if a grocer's store was opened in the village itself; and this happened when the population of a village reached a level sufficiently high to provide an economic turnover for a local tradesman.

This, however, is a simplification of the situation. In a rapidly expanding settlement, such as Leicester or any one of the market towns (with the exception of Lutterworth), provision of entirely new service facilities - for example, the opening of a new shop - would, of necessity, not take place at the same rate as the population expansion, and initially therefore, the additional trade accruing from the expanding population would fall to the businesses already in existence, thus inflating their size (competition from these businesses would act as a deterrent against new entrepreneurs). In the analysis of service facilities no cognizance has been taken of the variable size of retailing and other service

(i) (See above p.2/2-3.)

establishments, as this was a feature on which the directories gave no information. Thus, for example, the large high class grocer in the main shopping street of Leicester, or one of the market towns, scored a $\frac{1}{2}$ point when assessing the index of S.P. of the town; the small village grocer's shop, which might have had a quarter or a tenth of the turnover, also scored a $\frac{1}{2}$ point when assessing the index of S.P. Because Leicester and the market towns had by far the ~~largest~~ majority of these larger concerns their indices are somewhat under-stated (the under estimation was not so great in 1851 when the census returns provided details of size of some establishments). Hence, the lower relative importance of the service provision of 11% and 39% for Leicester, and the other market towns, respectively, were probably maximum figures. Information on which a more accurate analysis could be based is not available. (i)

However, even allowing for this fact we can still see quite clearly that Leicester and the market towns were of less relative importance in the urban hierarchy of 1900, than had been in that of 50 years earlier. This is confirmed by the changing situation in the third group of settlements. This

(i) (The differences in the size of retail establishments renders a count of shops at the present day invalid. In 1900 the process of development of multiples and chain stores, etc. was barely under weigh; it was still a period of family enterprises and the differences in size of shops was not sufficiently great^{as} to make the 'count' of no value. See also Bracey H.E. 'Some Rural Social Trends'. A Paper read to the Summer School of the Town Planning Institute. 1952)

group, as previously indicated, consisted of 35 settlements in which service provision overall was deficient, both in 1851 and in 1900, as shown by the fact that at both dates their ratios were less than 100%. In the 50 years, however, the percentage of the ^{county} population within their boundaries had declined from 21.6% to 18.9%. (This does not imply an absolute decline in population, of course; in fact their populations had increased from under 50,000 to over 80,000), but the proportion of the service provision in the county which they offered remained almost constant at about $16\frac{1}{2}\%$. Hence the group's ratio of S.P. to population had increased from 76.8 to 86.2; a percentage increase of 12.2. This group contained most of the important urban villages of the county, these forming the largest section of the group - the remainder being subsidiary centres related to an agricultural environment - e.g. Market Bosworth, Bottesford.

In the remainder of the settlements of the county there had been an even greater expansion in the ratio of S.P. to population: A percentage increase of about 30. Some of this increase was also due to the expansion of service provision in settlements enlarged by industrial and residential expansion. As, for example, in the cases of Ratby, Rothley, Woodhouse, Stoney Stanton, etc. In this case, however, another factor was involved - loss of population. Table 18 shows that these 290 settlements only accounted in 1900 for half the proportion of the county population which they had represented in 1851. In

addition to this relative decline, however, there had also been an absolute decline in population from 89,130 to 88,991. This small net loss hid increases which had taken place in some of the settlements - for example, those named above - and significant falls in some of the others. In these villages a factor which we mentioned earlier, in connection with rapidly expanding settlements, would operate in reverse. A slow but steadily declining population in a village would not immediately be matched by a proportionate decline in the service provision offered by that village. A tailor would not, for example, immediately close his business because over a period of 20 years emigration from the settlement exceeded the natural increase in the population by 50 people. Thus for many villages, whilst service provision remained static, the population steadily declined and hence the ratio of S.P. to population increased. To take one or two specific examples; in 1851 and 1900 the village of Buckminster had a grocer, a draper, and a tailor, in spite of a fall in population from 375 to 274; Sproxton's population in the same period fell from 426 to 306, yet in both 1851 and 1900 there were two boot and shoe repairers, a grocer, and a draper in the village - the only change involving the loss of one of the two tailors. At nearby Stonesby, the population fell from 286 to 199, yet two traders remained in the settlement. At Leire, in south west Leicestershire, there was still a tailor in the village in 1900 despite a fall in the population from 438 to 239 in the

previous 50 years. These examples suffice to indicate that in some of the agricultural villages the service provision persisted despite de-population. Hence in this group the improvement in the ratio of S.P. to population does not signify that any general expansion of service facilities into smaller settlements ^{took place.} Indeed, in areas remaining predominantly agricultural, two facts would appear to signify increasing dependence on the central market town through the latter half of the 19th century. Firstly, the fact that there were 115 villages without service provision in 1851; by 1900 this figure had grown to 150. And secondly, the fact that some of the subsidiary service centres lying midway between the market towns - e.g. Hallaton, Long Clawson, Wymondham - lost services which they had once provided.

The preceding paragraphs probably emphasise the complicated nature of the changing relationships between the market towns and their hinterlands in the late 19th century. Because the changes depended on the type of settlement found within the hinterlands any more detailed examination must essentially take into consideration the regional differentiation of the county into roughly two halves; one in which agriculture remained dominant, and the other in which industrial development determined the pattern of the settlement. In establishing the functional hinterlands of the market towns, we shall find that the regional division thereby achieved presents us with units in which one or other of the settlements patterns was dominant.

The hinterland of Melton, for example, will be found to be almost entirely agricultural, whilst that of Loughborough will be dominated by the industrial villages of the Soar valley. In a later chapter, therefore, we shall again return to the problems briefly presented in this chapter.

Meanwhile, as the continued importance of the market towns as central settlements has been called into question, their choice as centres in the primary division of the county into functional units must be justified, and, in particular, special consideration given to the position of Lutterworth, and to the proposal that the settlement of Coalville shall be treated as a central town in addition to the six market towns plus Leicester.

In the first chapter of this section it was noted that the functions of the central settlements in 1900 remained basically the same as they had been in the middle of the 19th century. In the first place, a central settlement had to provide a comprehensive marketing and trading service; and secondly, they remained the H.Q.'s of local administration.

In spite of the fact that the market towns no longer possessed such a degree of concentration of service facility, yet their continuing dominating position in the urban hierarchy in 1900 should not be under-evaluated. They remained at the head of the list of settlements in the county when indices of S.P. had been examined (see table 17). Moreover they were the

only settlements which provided a complete (or very nearly complete) range of the 22 services examined - services which had been chosen for analysis because they represented a range of needs basic to the life of the community.

Within the county there were but 19 settlements which had an index of concentration of service facilities greater than the county average of 8.7, and amongst these 19 were numbered the seven market towns, with indices ranging from 30.5 to 9.8 (see tables 17 and 19 and Fig. 36.) The surplus of service provision in the market towns was theoretically sufficient to meet the needs of an additional 56,199 people whereas the surplus provision from the other 12 settlements would only have provided for 8340 persons. These facts in themselves were sufficient to pinpoint the importance of the market towns as centres for areas looking to them for servicing facilities.

Apart, however, from the trading and marketing facilities available in the market towns, other features combined to confirm their importance. In 1900, they remained the centres of the local system of carriers' carts (see Figs. 37 and 38); they were still the most important centres of local administration following on the local government acts of 1888 and 1894 (see Fig. 41): most of them remained the marketing towns for the agricultural community (see Fig. 43); it was on the market towns that the local weekly newspapers were focussed thus helping to cement a unity of interest between the town and a

Table 19

Table showing settlements with Index of Conc. of Service Facility greater than the County Average			
Settlement	Population	Index of Concentration of Service Facility	Add.pop. which could theoretically be served by settlement's surplus Service Provision.
1. <u>The Market Towns</u>			
Leicester	211,579	9.8	26,740
Melton Mowbray	7,454	16.4	6,596
Loughborough	21,382	11.3	6,274
Market Harborough	6,435	16.3	5,621
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	4,726	19.9	4,934
Lutterworth	1,734	30.5	4,345
Hinckley	11,304	10.0	1,681
<u><u>TOTAL</u></u>			<u><u>59,199</u></u>
2. <u>Other Places with Index of Conc. of S.F. above the County Average</u>			
Kegworth	2,078	15.4	1,600
Castle Donington	2,514	14.1	1,560
Coalville	7,157	10.3	1,316
Market Bosworth	659	25.8	1,302
Bottesford	1,221	13.5	674
Shepshed	5,393	9.6	669
Measham	2,075	10.3	382
Billesdon	726	13.1	367
Somerby	503	11.9	195
Husbands Bosworth	741	10.1	122
Appleby Magna	649	10.0	97
Mountsorrel	2,417	8.9	56
<u><u>TOTAL</u></u>			<u><u>8,340</u></u>

hinterland. The sum total of this evidence would appear to point conclusively ^{to the fact} that a market town and its hinterland was still the basic functional unit within the county at the beginning of the 20th century.

There were, of course, differences between the market towns - as there had been differences in the middle of the 19th century. Differences arising not only from their varying importance as seats of industry, but also from the varied degree of service provision which they offered as central settlements.

Particularly 'light' in its possession of the functions of a central settlement was the town of Lutterworth. In the first place its index of S.P. was only 53.0 ; but a little more than half of that of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and but one fifth of that of Loughborough. The low index is, however, a reflection rather of the low population of the settlement rather than of a lack of facilities. It possessed 18 out of the 22 services examined, only three of the more specialised shops and a dentist not being locally available. Moreover, it could claim 41 out of the extended list of 50 services whose distribution in the market towns was examined (compared with 45 to 50 in the other towns). Thus the difference in the range of services which Lutterworth offered compared with the ranges offered by the other market towns was not particularly great.

It was also without a newspaper but this again was owing to the small population of the town - only 1734 - which made

such a facility entirely uneconomic, for even assuming its hinterland to be 5,000 strong the total population in the circulation area would have been less than the population of any other of the market towns (except Ashby-de-la-Zouch, which in any case, was also without a newspaper).

Lutterworth, therefore, was not so complete a centre as, for example, Melton Mowbray or Market Harborough, but a glance at Fig. 36 will indicate that, as a service centre, it was 'out on its own', isolated in south-west Leicestershire, the nearest competing centre being Rugby, eight miles away over the Warwickshire border. In spite of its small size, therefore, it still had important functions to fulfil in serving the rural community of the neighbourhood.

Finally it is necessary to justify the inclusion of Coalville as one of the more important central settlements of the county. The market towns had traditions of trading and marketing extending back through many centuries. No similar advantages could be claimed on behalf of Coalville. In 1851, its population had only been 1500, clustered in two groups of settlements around a couple of pit heads. A quarter of a century earlier than that, "it was reported to contain but two houses."⁽ⁱ⁾ It was, therefore, an entirely new settlement called into being by the needs of an industrial age. This was reflected in its lack of contact with the agricultural community as evidenced by the absence of a large stock market. This, however, by 1900 also applied to two of the old market towns of the

(i) (Kelly's Directory of Leicestershire. 1902. p.48.)

county - viz: Hinckley, and Lutterworth - and by this date it must be recognised that cattle marketing facilities were but one facet of the total activities and functions of a town.

Writing in 1944 Mr. A.E. Smailes commented:

"Before the industrial revolution, except in a few very special cases, the market was the truest gauge of the town. But urban life has now other and more important roots than those in the agricultural countryside and any attempt to assess urban rank by the importance of markets would involve a serious under evaluation of important classes of towns, and equally an over evaluation of others."⁽ⁱ⁾

By 1900 the industrial revolution had been continuing for well over a hundred years and industry had replaced agriculture as the primary economic activity of Leicestershire. (Out of 190,000 occupied persons in Leicestershire in 1901 only 15,000 were engaged in agriculture). Hence this statement on the position of markets in determining urban status was little less true in 1900 than a half century later. The unimportance of the cattle market at Coalville, therefore, does not automatically signify the unimportance of the town in the urban hierarchy.

The directories of the period showed no market day carriers travelling into Coalville at the beginning of the century, but recollections of friends of the writer - who had need to make use of such facilities - point to the existence of road transport into the town on Fridays (the day of the produce

(i) (Smailes A.E. The Urban Hierarchy in England and Wales. Geography. 29. 1944. p.41.)

market) and Saturdays. In addition, as Fig. 38 shows, Coalville was accessible from half a dozen railway stations within a mile or so of the town, and which between them served quite an extensive area with a large population.

The town lacked many of the administrative functions of the market towns of the county, but, by 1900, it was the centre of a large and populous urban district (see Fig. 41), the headquarters having been transferred to Coalville from Whitwick, two miles away to the north east, in 1895. In 1897 the local divisions for police and petty sessions were being referred to officially as the 'Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Coalville Districts.'⁽ⁱ⁾

The shops of the town were by this date providing out-of-town deliveries over a considerable area (Again based on recollections of friends of the writer and on information concerning the co-operative society*), and, in 1893, a local newspaper, printed and published in the town, made its initial appearance. In the first edition specific reference was made to the progress of the town:

"The very fact of a newspaper being printed in Coalville is a signal proof of the rapid strides the place has made of late years in growth and prosperity.....In the district in which our print circulates there is a population of about 25,000."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

But the importance of Coalville as a central trading settlement, was brought out in the analysis made of the

(i) (Minute Book of the Leicestershire County Council for 1897)
(ii) (Editorial in the Coalville Times. September 29th. 1893)

distribution of service provision. In 1851, there were but 7 of the 21 services available in the town. In 1900 - see table 16 - there were 17 out of the 22 offered by the town. Out of the extended list of 50 services, whose distribution in the market towns was examined, there were 40 available in Coalville. The town's index of S.P., moreover, was 74.0 - a degree of service provision considerably in excess of that at Lutterworth and almost equal to that at Ashby-de-la-Zouch. It had an index concentration of service facilities of 10.3 compared with the county average of 8.7. Its index was thus in excess of that for two of the market towns - Leicester and Hinckley - and not so far behind that for the town of Loughborough.

Thus the evidence points to the importance of Coalville in the urban hierarchy at the beginning of the 20th century. Naturally, as a service centre with no long standing historical associations, it would lack some of the service provisions offered by a market town, such as Melton, and certainly most of the atmosphere of a trading town of that type. However, for the densely peopled locality, in the centre of which the settlement of Coalville was located (see Fig.35), the town had developed as a service centre, to supply the needs of a population which otherwise would have had to seek to ~~supply~~^{meet} those needs by a visit to the more distant market towns of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Loughborough or Leicester. (It was at the meeting place of the hinterlands of these three towns that development of settlement was noted in the mid 19th century.)⁽ⁱ⁾ Coalville's relationship with its sphere of influence will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

(i) (See above. p. 213 and Fig. 27).

CHAPTER THREE.DETERMINATION OF THE HINTERLANDS OF THE MARKET TOWNS
IN 1900.

Only one adequate criterion was available for a county wide analysis of the spheres of influence of the market towns in 1900. This criterion was the evidence offered by a study of the efficiency of transport facilities into the market towns. It was, however, an important item of evidence for, as previously pointed out,⁽ⁱ⁾ in 1900 regular communication between town and village was related to the marketing facilities of the towns, and thus, the area from which market day transport was available to a given town would delimit very closely the area over which the town had any significant influence. For each of the seven market towns evidence of road transport facilities was available from contemporary directories, and the then current railway timetables gave the information concerning the train services available.

In the studies of town-country relations in the mid 19th century a very detailed study of the transport facilities available to the market towns was then made. For the present investigations the features to be examined and the methods employed in the task are along similar lines to those of the earlier date, and for a detailed critique of the analyses the reader is referred to the previous section.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The main differences - both in methodology and in the

(i) (See above. p. 274.)
(ii) (See above. p. 141)

results obtained - were occasioned by the much more important part that railways played in local transportation by 1900. As previously mentioned, the railway network in Leicestershire was completed in 1899; by that time there were 72 stations within the county (outside the market towns). The railways had not, however, driven the carriers' carts off the roads, as the stage coaches had been driven off immediately rail travel became a nation wide phenomenon. A glance at the diagram for 1901 on Fig. 17, in which the white areas generally - though not entirely - represent the daily transport services provided by the railways, will indicate what a large part of the county was located more than one mile from a railway station; and a glance at any of the diagrams (except that for Coalville) on Figs. 37 and 38 will reveal the high percentage of a town's theoretical area of accessibility which was not served by rail transport. The carriers' carts were, in 1900, still of great importance in supplementing railway transport facilities. Also on Figs. 37 and 38 are shown the number of carts which arrived in the various towns on their respective market days. There were 158 in the case of Leicester; 61 to Melton Mowbray; 53 to Loughborough; 36 to Market Harborough and to Hinckley; 20 to Ashby-de-la-Zouch; and even 18 to Lutterworth, a settlement of less than 1750 inhabitants in 1901. These numbers compared very favourably with those for the middle of the 19th century. To only two towns were there significantly less carts available at the later date - viz: 158 compared with 228 to Leicester; 18 compared with 34 to

Lutterworth - and, indeed, to several of the towns there were more carts in 1900. As, for example, at Melton Mowbray to which there were 61 carts in 1900 compared with 54 in 1851.

In assessing the importance of the transport facilities to the several towns at this date, a major difficulty arises by virtue of the very differing attributes of the two types of transport. The railways provided a fast, daily service to the town, whilst the carts gave but a slow, weekly service; where both facilities were available to a given town from a specific village then it would seem that there must have been a division of function - the trains supplying passenger facilities and the carts bringing out the supplies to the village shop, or the items of agricultural equipment to the farms, etc. In these cases both forms of transport would be contributing towards welding together the town and the hinterland. In other cases, however, the issue was not so straight forward. Market Bosworth, in west-Leicestershire, had secured rail communication with Nuneaton, in Warwickshire, in 1874 and, by 1900, there was a daily service of eight trains between the town and the village. Yet, at the same time, carriers' carts were available on market days from Market Bosworth to both Hinckley and Leicester. Here comparison of the facilities was difficult. Ullesthorpe, a village situated on the Leicester and Rugby railway, had daily services available to each of the towns, 11 and 8 miles away respectively; there was also a daily carriers service available to nearby Lutterworth, only three miles distant; thus it was not possible to state

explicitly to which centre the village was bound most closely by the different transport facilities available.

Therefore, in assessing the boundaries of the transport hinterlands - illustrated on Fig. 39 - it was necessary to treat each instance of competing facilities on an 'ad hoc' basis, when a decision to include a settlement in one hinterland or another had to be made. Basically the method adopted was to assess the extent of the hinterlands by examination, firstly, of the carriers' carts facilities, and secondly, to superimpose on this picture the rail facilities available. In most cases it was ascertained that the rail facilities confirmed the extent of the hinterlands (local services on the railways were essentially inter-urban - e.g. Melton to Market Harborough; Ashby to Nuneaton - with each village station on the route having an equal number of services to either centre. It has been assumed that the nearer centre, and hence the one most accessible in terms of time and money, would attract the most traffic), but in cases such as those mentioned above, the boundaries were readjusted to give due weight to the importance of rail connections. Market Bosworth, for example, was included in the hinterland of Nuneaton, and East Norton, located on the Leicester to Uppingham road and with carriers available to each of these centres on market days, in the hinterland of Market Harborough, to which centre there was a daily service of five trains making the journey in a time of only 16 minutes.

For 1851 a detailed analysis was made of the 'areas of

theoretical accessibility' to each market town.⁽¹⁾ In Figs. 37 and 38 this information is plotted for 1900. As far as road transport is concerned, a comparison of the diagrams for each centre for each of the two dates will show that there were few significant differences in the areas accessible. One exception, however, was in the case of Loughborough, for the area to the south-west of the town, from which road transport had been available in the middle of the 19th century, was no longer accessible by 1900. By the latter date the settlements of Bagworth, Thornton, Barlestone, etc., which had formerly had carriers' carts to Loughborough, were well served by rail facilities to both Leicester and Coalville.

As the diagrams show, however, by 1900 the railways were of some importance in determining the areas of theoretical accessibility. Within each diagram are indicated the areas within one mile of a railway station from which a direct train service was available to the centre. As most of the rail services were of the inter-urban type this gives a picture in each diagram of two or more radiating strings of stations, from the market town under consideration to the neighbouring centres.

From Leicester, 11 lines of railway provided accessibility into the city giving direct communication with all the other market towns of the county and to many in neighbouring counties. In all 160 trains arrived in Leicester daily, serving 63 stations in the county. There were 47 trains available daily from Loughborough, and there were good facilities from the other market

(1) (See above. p. 144)

ACCESSIBILITY TO LEICESTERSHIRE CENTRES IN 1900

BASED ON ANALYSES OF ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT FACILITIES

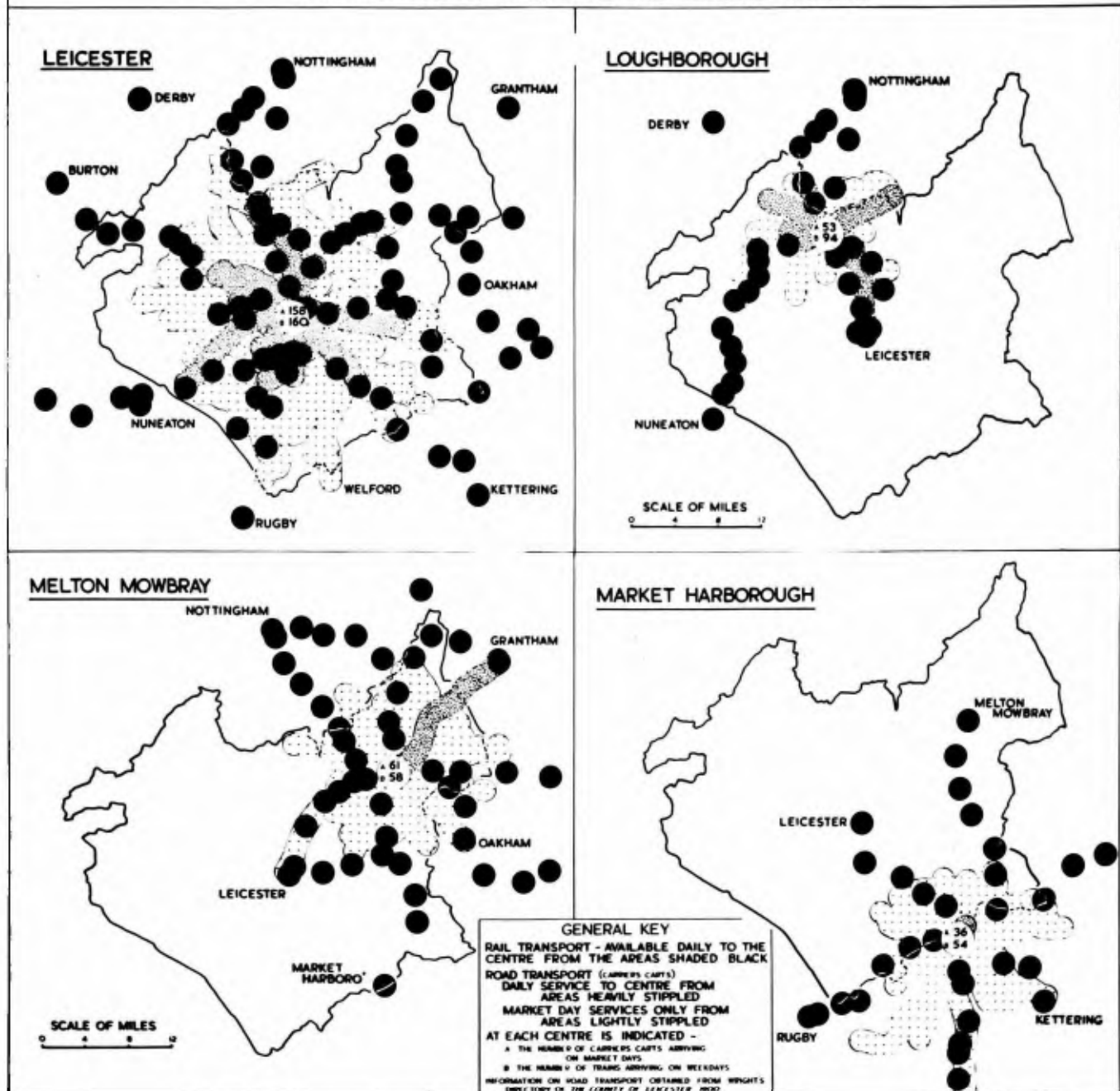


FIG. 37.

towns - viz: 19 trains from Melton Mowbray, 13 from Lutterworth, Hinckley, and Market Harborough, and 10 from Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Nearer to Leicester, from those stations within its hinterland, the number of trains into the city ranged from 24 from Syston, to 12 from Narborough and Blaby, to 10 from Whetstone, and the stations from John O'Gaunt in the eastern part of the county, down to a minimum of three trains from the stations at Glenfield and Ratby on the original Leicester and Swannington line, opened in 1833.

To the other market towns the facilities were, of course, more limited but at Melton Mowbray trains approached the town from eight different directions. From Leicester there were two routes, one via the Wreak valley serving five local stations, with a daily service of six to eight trains, and the other via east Leicestershire, with seven trains daily, and joining with the line from Market Harborough to service another two stations with a total of 12 daily trains. From the east, there were routes from Bourne, and from Peterborough via Oakham, and on these lines the local stations had from 3 to 10 trains daily available to Melton. From the north, there were two routes from Nottingham and one from Grantham, with a through service from Newark in addition. Altogether there were 58 trains into the town daily. North of Melton - on the lines to Nottingham and Grantham - were some excellent examples of the type of provision made for passenger traffic at this period. The railway stations were invariably built to serve two villages and were located some

considerable distance from each; for example, the villages of Long Clawson and Hose were $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the station of that name; Harby and Stathern were each more than one mile from their station - but between this station and the next one, the line passed within half a mile of two villages, with populations of 270 and 200, and yet at neither of these were facilities for rail communication provided. However, in spite of these deterrents, the railways did provide an easier means of communication into the town and were evidently considered to be of some importance for, in 1882, a Town meeting decided to ask the railway companies to issue Tuesday market tickets to Melton at special cheap fares,⁽ⁱ⁾ and at this period there was an extra market day train to Melton from Leicester calling at all stations.

There were six railway lines leading into the town of Market Harborough, with a daily service of 54 trains from 24 stations within a ten mile radius. The number of trains ranged from four to ten, and thus the services could not be described as inconsiderable. Again, however, in many instances stations were located to serve two villages, especially on the routes to Northampton and Stamford and the walk to the station was up to two miles in length. Perhaps this had something to do with the fact that, in 1900, it was reported that "three quarters of the people who come to town come by road".⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

(i) (Report in the Melton Mowbray Herald. June 6th 1882)

(ii) (From a report of a public meeting convened to consider the removal of the cattle market from the streets and quoted in the Market Harborough Advertiser of May 29th 1900.)

Loughborough, Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch were each served by four or five lines running into the town. There were particularly frequent services to Loughborough along the main lines from Leicester and Nottingham, with stations located in the centre of many of the large industrial villages - as, for example, at Quorn, Barrow, Sileby - and, in the description of the Loughborough Fair for 1881, comments were made on the importance of the train services from these places:

"Friday, the day appointed for the statutes, was, of course, the busiest day during the fair, so far at least as the number of visitors was concerned.....By all the morning trains visitors from the neighbouring villages arrived in the town."⁽ⁱ⁾

An additional market day train ran from Syston to Loughborough on Thursdays calling at Sileby, and Barrow on Soar, and returning in the afternoon.

The two remaining market towns, however, - viz: Hinckley and Lutterworth - were not well favoured by rail communications. Hinckley was only served by the Leicester, Nuneaton and Birmingham railway, opened in 1864, and Lutterworth merely by the Great Central route from London and Rugby to Leicester and the north, and with but one station in its market area (see Figs. 38 and 39). The town, moreover, had to wait until 1899 to even secure this connection. Hinckley should have had connection with the line from Nuneaton leading to Burton, Ashby-de-la-Zouch,

(i) (Report in the North Leicestershire Herald.
November 17th. 1881)

ACCESSIBILITY TO LEICESTERSHIRE CENTRES IN 1900

BASED ON ANALYSES OF ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT FACILITIES

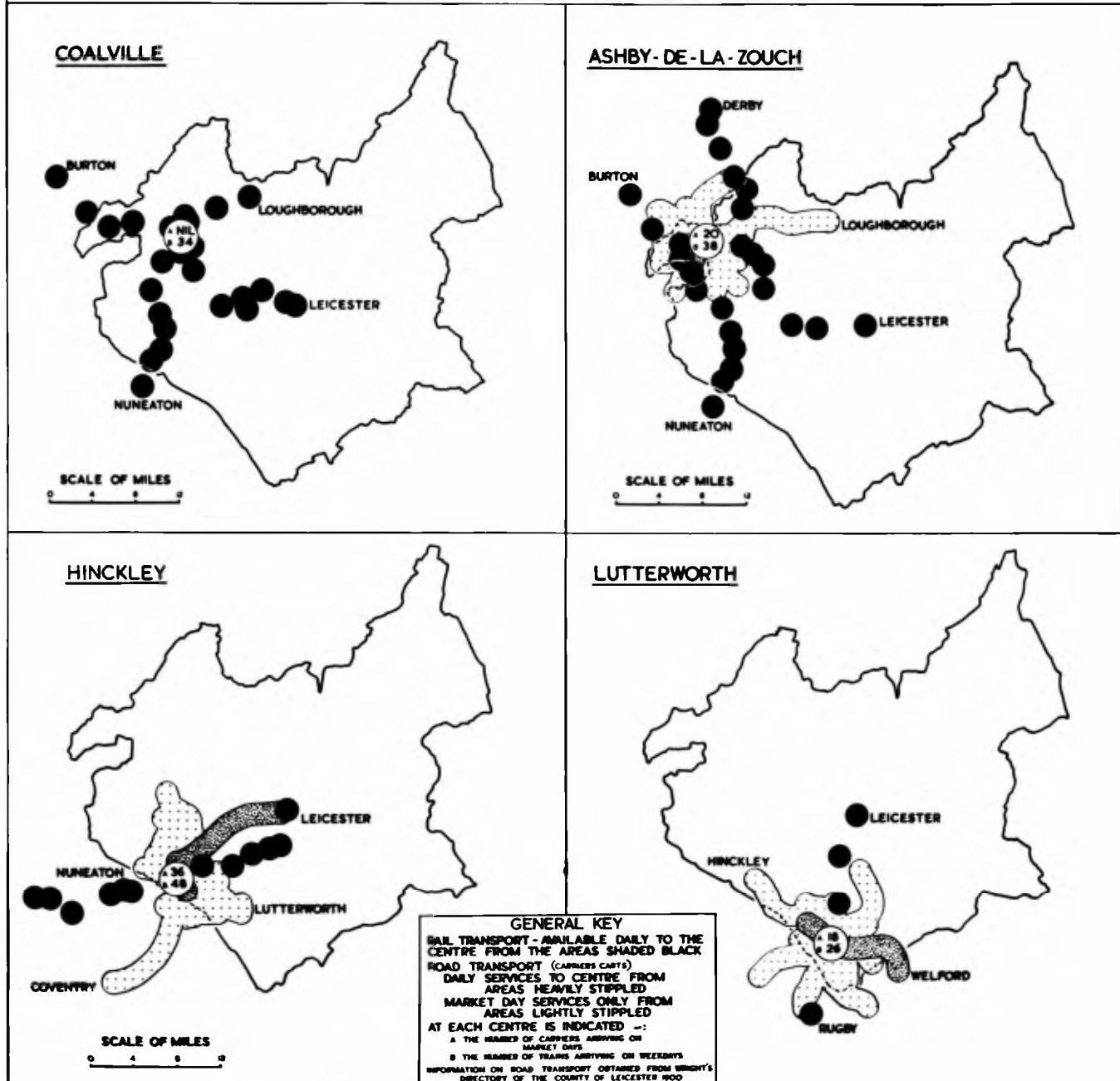


FIG. 38.

Coalville and Loughborough, but the short spur line planned to the town was never opened. This lack of rail connection was keenly felt in the town for, in 1900, in a strongly worded newspaper editorial, the following comments were made:

"Hinckley market is not one half the size it formerly was, and the several reasons contributing to this are not hard to find. Railway facilities to Nuneaton and Leicester are far greater from some agricultural villages close to us, than they are to Hinckley".⁽ⁱ⁾

Here was an example where railway facilities had clearly caused an alteration in the local orientation of trade and travel and, in the next part of this chapter, this feature, and other similar features, will be examined in rather more detail.

In Fig. 39 are delimited the hinterlands of the market towns based on an examination of the transport facilities available to them.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Comparing the hinterlands of the towns thus obtained, with the hinterlands of the market towns determined in 1851 (see Fig. 26), examples of better rail facilities leading to a change in the hinterland boundaries can be readily picked out. Some of the examples are shown in Fig. 40.

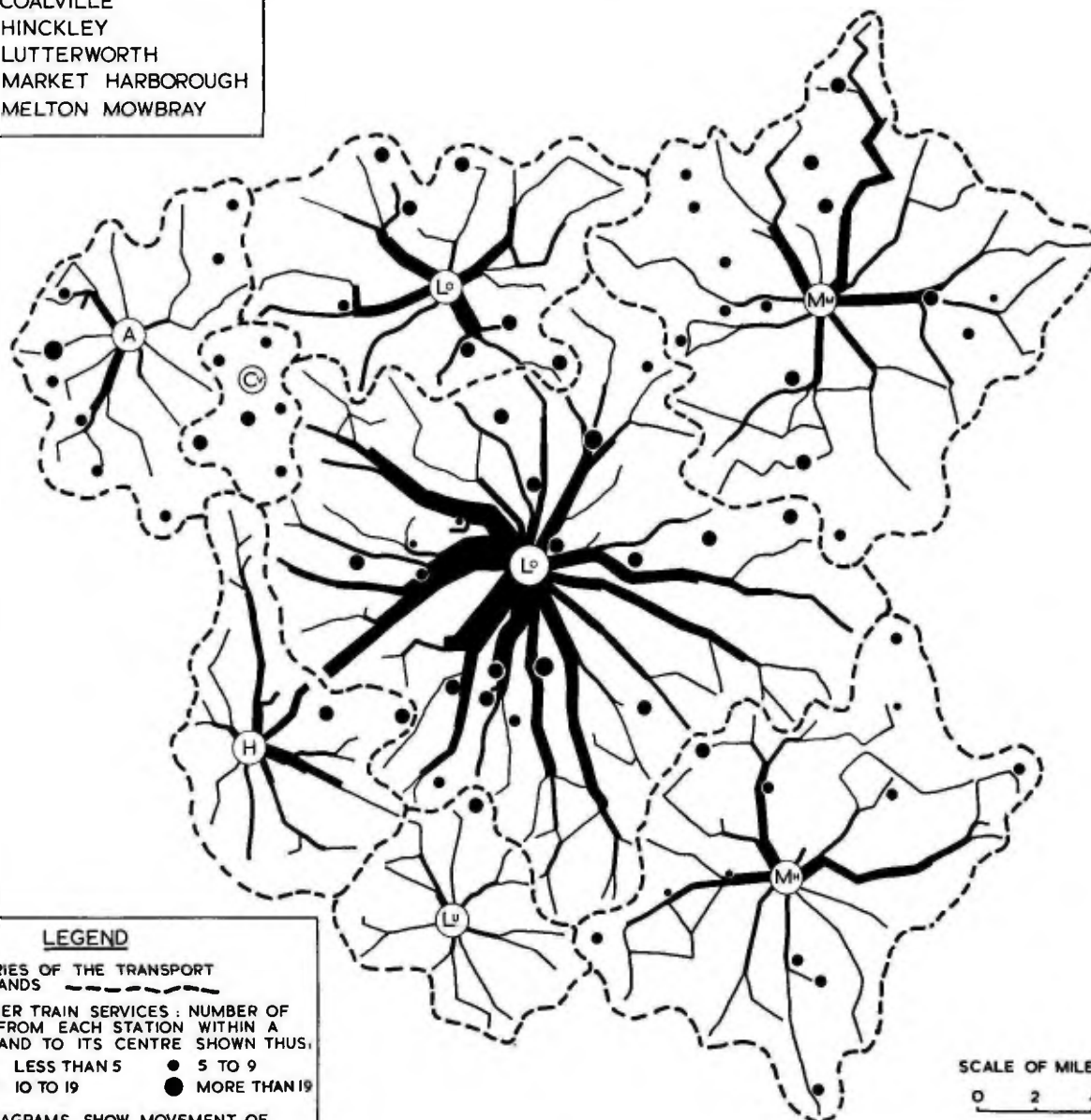
Due south of Melton Mowbray, railway facilities from two stations resulted in a southwards extension of Melton's hinterland into areas formerly with greatest accessibility to

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- (i) (Editorial in the Hinckley Times and Bosworth Herald for October 20th. 1900.)
 - (ii) (Determined in a similar manner to that utilised in the 19th century. See above. p. 152. Except concerning the difficulties - already mentioned - in connection with correlating rail and road transport)

HINTERLANDS OF LEICESTERSHIRE CENTRES BASED ON MARKET DAY TRANSPORT FACILITIES 1900

L • LEICESTER
L LOUGHBOROUGH
A ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH
C COALVILLE
H HINCKLEY
L LUTTERWORTH
M MARKET HARBOROUGH
M MELTON MOWBRAY

SHOWING DENSITY OF FACILITIES WITHIN HINTERLANDS



LEGEND

BOUNDARIES OF THE TRANSPORT
HINTERLANDS - - - - -

PASSENGER TRAIN SERVICES : NUMBER OF
TRAINS FROM EACH STATION WITHIN A
HINTERLAND TO ITS CENTRE SHOWN THUS:

• LESS THAN 5 • 5 TO 9
• 10 TO 19 • MORE THAN 19

FLOW DIAGRAMS SHOW MOVEMENT OF
CARRIERS CARTS FROM WITHIN A
HINTERLAND TO ITS CENTRE :

NUMBER OF CARTS: 30
20
10
102

SCALE OF MILES

0 2 4

DIAGRAM BASED ON ANALYSIS OF TIMETABLES AND ON INFORMATION FROM WRIGHTS DIRECTORY OF LEICS FOR 1900

FIG. 39.

Leicester or Oakham. The stations concerned were those at John O'Gaunt - serving the villages of Twyford (population 312) and Burrow-on-the-Hill (population 149) - and Tilton, serving the village of Halstead and other smaller settlements such as Whatborough with a total population of about 300. From John O'Gaunt there were 12 trains daily to Melton with a journey time of 13 minutes, whereas to Leicester in the opposite direction there were but 7 trains taking 29 minutes on the journey. Therefore, on scores of both frequency of service and cost of the journey (reflected in the time taken), Melton was by far the most accessible.

From Tilton station there were five trains to Melton each taking 22 minutes; 4 to Market Harborough taking 23 minutes; and 3 to Leicester taking 31 minutes; thus although the inhabitants of the settlements would have the choice of three centres Melton again held the advantage for easiest accessibility. (The village of Tilton itself was actually nearer to the station at Lowesby from which there was a more adequate service of trains to both Leicester and to Melton.)

Railway facilities to Market Harborough led to a considerable extension in the town's sphere of influence. West from the town the village of North Kilworth (population 413) had, in 1851, been peripheral to the hinterlands of Market Harborough and Lutterworth. In that year the Rugby and Market Harborough railway had been opened and a station built within half a mile of North Kilworth village. By 1900 there were six

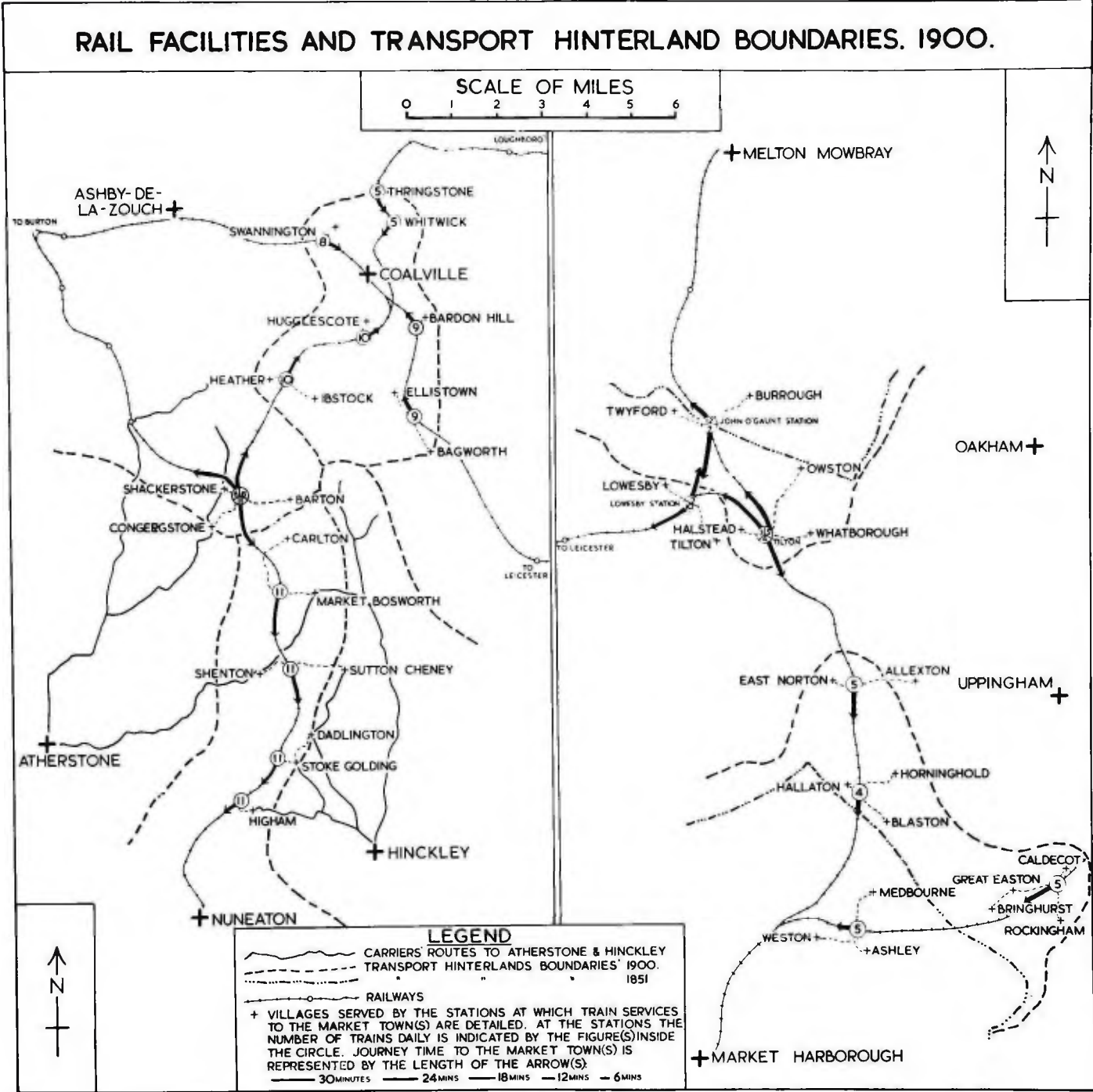


FIG. 40.

daily trains between Market Harborough and this particular station, the journey taking only 15 to 18 minutes. These facilities gave much greater accessibility to Market Harborough than did the daily carriers' cart working from the village into Lutterworth; a journey of 5 miles which must have taken the best part of an hour.

Eastwards from Market Harborough, however, railway development had brought a much more extensive gain to the hinterland of the town. In 1851, the whole of the south-eastern corner of the county had fallen within the hinterland of the market town of Uppingham in Rutland. Its hinterland stretched as far west as Hallaton and Medbourne (see Fig 26). In 1851, the railway from Market Harborough to Stamford was opened, passing very near to Medbourne and several other adjacent villages but bypassing the town of Uppingham. In 1879, the Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray branch railway was opened, serving Hallaton and East Norton on its way to the north. No fewer than 9 settlements lay within one mile of the four stations in this area and from each, good facilities were available to Market Harborough. Five trains daily were available from the stations at Rockingham and Ashley and Weston; the journey time in the former case being only 19 minutes and in the latter, only 8 minutes. From Hallaton there were 4 trains covering the eight miles to Market Harborough in 10 minutes and from East Norton, five, each taking 16 minutes. Uppingham's influence in this part of the county completely collapsed and an

area containing a population of about 2500 in 1901 was added to the hinterland of Market Harborough.

In the west of the county the opening of the railway between Nuneaton, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and Coalville caused some changes in the orientation of local trade. Railways connecting the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire coalfields with the Trent valley line had been mooted ever since the latter railway was opened in the 1840's, but because of the delaying effects of railway politics it was 30 years before the lines were eventually constructed.⁽ⁱ⁾ During this period plans had been laid before Parliament for railways from Atherstone, from Hinckley, and from Nuneaton to various connecting points on the Leicester and Burton railway. Eventually the Midland Railway and the London and North Western Railway constructed a joint line from Nuneaton to Ashby-de-la-Zouch via Market Bosworth, and with a branch line from Shackerstone to Coalville. Hinckley, as previously mentioned, was completely bypassed. The result of this as far as local trade was concerned was to Nuneaton's gain, and Hinckley's and Atherstone's loss. In 1851, the villages lying along the route taken by the railway south of Bosworth were served by both of these latter two towns - neither centre having a dominating influence. On completion of the railway, the villages were immediately put into close contact with Nuneaton. From the four stations at Market Bosworth, Shenton, Stoke Golding and Higham-on-the-Hill there

(i) (Odell P.R. A study of Local Railway Geography. An Unpublished Thesis in the University of Birmingham. April 1951.)

were 11 daily trains into Nuneaton, the journey times being only 24, 18, 14 and 7 minutes respectively. By contrast the transport to Hinckley, from the six villages served by these stations, was a total of three market day carriers' carts which between them provided facilities from only four of the villages. These villages had a total population of 2,300 and thus represented an important addition to the hinterland of Nuneaton, and a serious loss to the interests of Hinckley.

In the opposite direction, of course, the railway also provided communication with Ashby and Coalville. From Market Bosworth there were 5 trains daily to Ashby and 8 to Coalville each taking 37 minutes and 26 minutes respectively. Thus, almost equally good rail communications were available to the expanding town of Coalville, as there were to Nuneaton, and some traffic may have been drawn off to the north. Shackerstone, the next station on the line to the north, served the village of that name (population 277), and in addition lay within a mile of Barton-in-the-Beans (population 152) and Congerstone (population 216), with Bilstone only ^{another} half a mile away. Passenger train facilities from this station were as follows:-

To Nuneaton - 11 trains taking 30 to 35 minutes.

To Ashby - 6 trains taking 30 minutes.

To Coalville - 8 trains taking only 20 minutes.

In this case again there was a choice of three centres but with Nuneaton rather more expensive to reach. It would, therefore, seem that the choice lay between Ashby and Coalville with the

former probably preferred, because it had shared in the provision of services to this area in the pre-railway era and, secondly, its attractions, especially to an agricultural neighbourhood such as this, were superior to those of Coalville.

In the whole of this area, however, as far north as Shackerstone, Nuneaton was to assume the dominant place as service centre. The establishment of rail communication between the Warwickshire town and these Leicestershire villages led to an extension of Nuneaton's trading activities in the area, for, in 1917, the Co-operative Society opened a grocery branch in Market Bosworth and from which deliveries were made to all the surrounding villages. The Nuneaton Co-operative Society also offered a comprehensive dry goods service, and in the choice of clothes and furniture, etc. most customers would prefer to make the journey by rail into Nuneaton; hence a tradition of looking to the town for trading facilities gradually developed.

Three examples, from different parts of the county, have been detailed to indicate important changes in spheres of influence resulting from the development of the railways. Other, though less important, examples could also be given in connection with the remaining market towns but these would merely illustrate features already described.

However, in concluding this part of the chapter, dealing with transport facilities and urban hinterlands, it is necessary to examine in some detail a situation which has already been briefly referred to, and which demonstrates a still more

important effect of railway development on town-country relations.

"Coalville may be termed a product of the railway era....It developed as the chief railway centre in this region. The Leicester and Swannington Railway Company established their engine shed and workshops here, and the marshalling yards were also located in the neighbourhood. This was due to the fact that most of the traffic originated within a few miles of the growing town....With the extension of the railway to Burton-on-Trent and to the main line at Leicester the marshalling yards at Coalville began to handle traffic from the South Derbyshire area in addition to the local traffic.....The importance of the town from the railway point of view was enhanced by the entry of the L.N.W.R. from Nuneaton in 1873, and by the construction of the Charnwood Forest railway (to Loughborough) in 1883. Two motive power depots were built and Coalville was made a District Operating Centre by the Midland Railway.....In 1901 the railways were the third largest employers of labour in the town." (i)

The importance of Coalville as a railway centre was, of course, largely based on the large scale movements of freight traffic - especially of coal - into the town. However the four routes converging on Coalville were also served by passenger trains and it is suggested that these facilities for passenger

(i) (ibid. p.31.)

travel into Coalville first led to the development of the town as a central settlement. By 1900 there were 34 trains moving daily into the town and there were no fewer than seven stations within 12 minutes travelling distance of Coalville. On the line from Leicester, Bagworth and Bardon Hill were 10 and 5 minutes away respectively, with a daily service of seven trains. From Swannington, on the line from Burton-on-Trent, there were six trains, each covering the distance in 8 minutes; on the line from Loughborough, Thringstone halt was 10 minutes journey and Whitwick station only five minutes away with four daily trains available from each; and on the railway from Shackerstone, which station had, as we have already seen, better rail facilities to Coalville than to either Ashby or to Nuneaton, Heather and Ibstock station was only 12 minutes journey away, and Hugglescote only 6 minutes, and each with a service of 10 trains daily to the town; by 1910 there was an additional market day train on Fridays running to Coalville from Shackerstone calling at these two stations. The fact that such rail facilities existed to Coalville does not necessarily indicate that they were used. For example, from Bagworth the bulk of the journeys may have been in the opposite direction to Leicester, but as the journey was three times as long, and therefore, considerably more expensive, there were advantages to be gained in visiting Coalville. Moreover from Heather and Hugglescote stations, a visit to a town other than Coalville - for example, Ashby or Leicester - involved changing trains in

Coalville and thus, for those facilities which were obtainable in Coalville, to travel further afield would have been a waste of time and money. Railway facilities did put Coalville in touch more closely than any of the market towns with about ten settlements within a four mile radius of the town, and with a total population of about 8,000, and laid the foundation stone for the hinterland which was to develop around Coalville in the 20th century in the mining-cum-agricultural neighbourhood.

The fact that local transport facilities were a feature common to all the market towns in 1900 has enabled us to make a comparison between the hinterlands of the several centres on this evidence. As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, however, it is the only criterion available in 1900 on which a county wide analysis of town-country relations could be made. Evidence of the other facets of the regional activities of the market towns is not available on a strictly comparable basis for each of the eight centres. In the next chapter, however, the hinterlands of several of the towns will be examined and the opportunity to consider evidence, such as that included on Fig. 43 of the marketing areas of Leicester, Ashby, Loughborough and Melton Mowbray, or that on Fig. 44 showing the circulation areas of the local newspapers, or other evidence showing the social groupings around a town, will then arise.

For 1851, it will be remembered that a close examination of the areas served by the towns for the purposes of administration

was possible because so many of the divisions were formed about that time and many of them were de-limited on a basis of convenience in visiting the headquarter town. From a study of seven services, 'administrative' hinterlands of the market towns were determined. (see Fig. 24.)

For 1900 no similar analysis was possible, for the most important areas of local administration no longer even made a pretence of representing areas with a 'community of interest', and other areas had not had their boundaries amended in the intervening period since the middle of the 19th century, in spite of the changes in town country relations such as we have already examined. Amongst these latter could be numbered the petty sessional divisions and the county court districts (see Fig. 41.).

As far as the county court districts were concerned the fact that their boundaries ignored the county boundaries, and their headquarters were located in the market towns, they may have been correlated most closely with the hinterlands of the market towns. But their extent had not been altered to take account of the changed relationships between town and country. For example, South-east Leicestershire still lay in the Uppingham district in spite of the fact that as a result of railway development the area looked to Market Harborough for its services. Or, in the western part of the county, the settlement of Market Bosworth remained a district headquarter. Even in the middle of the nineteenth century we had seen how

the importance of this formerly important market town had declined, such that it no longer offered a comprehensive range of services, to justify its inclusion amongst the major central settlements of the county. Since 1851, however, its decline had been even more sure and more speedy. By 1901 its population had fallen to 659 (from 1058 in 1851 and 791 in 1801). Its index of service provision in 1851 had placed it in 9th. position in the county having had 1.2% of the county total of S.P. By 1900 it had fallen to 20th. position and had only .44% of the total S.P. of the county. Its decline as a trading centre was epitomised by the fact that whereas there was a full-time bank in the town in 1851, by 1900 this had become merely a part-time institution. No revision of the county court district had been made in recognition of Bosworth's late 19th century extinction as a service centre of any significance.

Likewise, for the petty sessional divisions no major changes in boundaries had been ordered. This was of rather more importance for the divisions had, on the formation of the county councils in 1888, been made the district areas within the county for the administration of county council services. Hence the growing importance of Coalville as the centre of a district with social cohesion, or the decline of Market Bosworth, or the absurdity of a district in east Leicestershire based on a village with a population of 149, had not been recognised and taken into consideration.

In the new administrative divisions, formed after 1870, the 'geographical aspect of the social and economic structure of society' ⁽ⁱ⁾ was totally ignored. First of all, in 1872, was introduced the breach between town and country, when the Public Health Act instituted Urban Sanitary Authorities "chosen on the grounds of their existing status, rather than on their particular suitability for the task." ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ The importance and the effect of this act was described in the following terms:

"The Act had lasting effects on the structure of local government....From the standpoint of areas the Act was decisive. It firmly imprinted upon the structure of local government the separation of urban and rural authorities, the divorce of town from country even at the district level.....The principles of 1872, therefore, were the exact reverse of those of 1834, which sought to unite town and country into compact and convenient units." ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

In 1894 the District Council's Act confirmed this situation when it set up separate urban and rural districts. The effect of this in Leicestershire can be seen in the first diagram on Fig. 41. For example, the market towns of Melton Mowbray and Market Harborough were torn apart, administratively speaking, from their hinterland areas which henceforward were to be controlled by a separate authority.

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- (i) (Dickinson R.E. The Social Basis of Physical Planning. Sociological Review. Vol. 34. 1942. p. 51)
(ii) (Lipman V.D. Local Government Areas. 1834-1945. Oxford. 1949. p. 93)
(iii) (ibid. p. 96.)

As far as the rural authorities were concerned it was decided, after a great deal of argument, and after evidence taken before both a Royal Commission and a Parliamentary Select Committee as to the relative merits of petty sessional and poor law union areas, that the latter should be utilised as the basic units for rural government. In Leicestershire not all unions represented areas with a community of interest in the 1830's and 1840's, and a half century later the situation had degenerated even further, firstly, because of the changing town-country relations which we have already noted, and secondly, because from the areas of the unions had been severed the areas of the urban authorities. Thus, in many cases the rural districts were remnants of areas already inconveniently shaped. For instance, Loughborough rural district was divided into two halves by the urban authorities of Loughborough and Shepshed. Rural districts were centred on Barrow-on-Soar and Blaby merely because they had been poor law union centres in the 1830's, and there was no community of interest between the different parts of the districts. (see Fig. 41.)

Another Act contributed to the process by which relations between a town and its hinterland were broken as far as local administrative services were concerned. The Act of 1888 was designed to make the county councils primary units of local government. The boundaries of the county councils were made coincident with those of the ancient counties (in the case of Leicestershire dating from the 10th century), and this led

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS IN LEICESTERSHIRE IN 1900

BOROUGHES, URBAN & RURAL DISTRICTS.



COUNTY COURT DISTRICTS



PETTY SESSIONAL DIVISIONS ALSO ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS FOR A NUMBER OF COUNTY SERVICES



POST TOWNS AND DISTRICTS



FIG. 41.

to complications in the relationship with the Rural Sanitary Authorities (having the same areas as those of the unions), as many of them overlapped the boundaries of the ancient counties. In 1894, therefore, it was decided that the Rural Sanitary Districts falling within two counties should be divided along the county boundaries, and either a separate rural district formed within a county, or else, in cases where less than five parishes were involved, those to be united with one of the other rural districts in the same county.

In studies of the mid-19th. century administrative areas it was seen that the county boundary of Leicestershire was ignored in many instances so that compact poor law union areas could be formed around market towns close to the county boundary. Thus, this Act had important repercussions in Leicestershire. Firstly, it created areas which had no claim to be effective units of administration. In south-east Leicestershire the group of parishes which had to be separated from the Uppingham union area was made into the Hallaton rural district with a total population of less than 2,000. Hallaton itself was a decayed medieval market centre with a population in 1901 of only 602 and offering but a limited range of service provision (viz: 5 services out of the 22 examined).

In the north east of the county seven parishes were formed into the Belvoir Rural District with the headquarters at Bottesford. The total population of this district was under 3,000, with 1221 of these in Bottesford itself. Evidence in

1900 showed that these places still looked to Grantham for service. They fell within the transport hinterland of Grantham (see Fig. 39) and, as Fig. 44 shows, the Grantham Journal was the newspaper which circulated in the district. Reporting in 1870, the Inspectors of the Poor Law stated specifically that to transfer these parishes to an area other than one centred on Grantham would cause difficulties and hardship. (i)

In south-west Leicestershire six parishes with a population of 1173 were separated from Atherstone rural sanitary authority and, for a time, constituted the Rural District of Sheepy. The only transport available from these villages was to the town of Atherstone, which was a maximum of only four miles distant. The dissatisfaction of the local inhabitants with the proposal to separate them from their market town had been reported to the County Council⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ but, in spite of these protests, the mutilation was carried out in 1894. Two years later, in order to eliminate a rural district with a population of ~~less than~~ a 1000, and which therefore could not be effectively governed, it was decided that these parishes should be joined to the rural district of Market Bosworth; a settlement whose deficiencies as a central town have already been described, and which was, moreover, more than eight miles away, with no public transport facilities available.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Surely in

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- (i) (Grantham Union. Report by the Poor Law Inspectors on the boundaries of Unions which are situated in more than one county. P.R.O. 1870)
(ii) (Minutes of the Leicestershire County Council. 20th July 1889)
(iii) (ibid. 6th May 1896)

this instance, as in the case of the north-east Leicestershire parishes, the county boundary should have been altered in order to meet with the wishes of the inhabitants, and to have made local government more effective by leaving the parishes under the jurisdiction of the town to which they looked for marketing and servicing facilities (viz: Atherstone in Warwickshire). As W.A. Robson commented, however:

"The county councils claimed the right to be regarded as mysteriously sacred and inviolable and liable to suffer no change from the profane hand of legislator or Minister."⁽ⁱ⁾

In a similar manner those Leicestershire towns which had part of their union areas across the county boundary lost them by the legislation of 1894. Particularly affected were Market Harborough, Loughborough, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and Hinckley. Lutterworth also had Warwickshire parishes within its union area but, by 1900, it had lost most of its influence with those, owing to the growth in importance of the Warwickshire town of Rugby.

Almost half of the union of Market Harborough was in Northamptonshire, and even this area was not so extensive as the marketing area of the town as revealed in the evidence of transport facilities and newspaper circulation for 1900. Ten Nottinghamshire parishes were in the Loughborough Union, and again evidence pointed to the fact that they still looked to Loughborough as their service centre in 1900; and with most of

(i) (Robson W.A. The Development of Local Government. London. 1932. p. 96.)

the 12 Derbyshire parishes within the Ashby union the position was the same.

The report of the Poor Law inspectors on these Unions read as follows:-

"The transfer of these parishes from their present unions to others would in nearly every instance entail considerable hardship on the poor as they would be compelled to travel a greater distance to attend the boards of guardians and have less facilities than at present for obtaining medical relief." (i)

Yet only in the case of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, where half-a-dozen of the Derbyshire parishes in its hinterland were transferred to Leicestershire, was the situation even partially recognised. Elsewhere the 'foreign' parishes lost their administrative contacts with their customary marketing town.

This brief survey of the development of administrative areas at the end of the 19th century indicates why it was no longer possible to look at these areas as giving information concerning the relationships between town and country. In many instances not only were these relationships ignored, but decisions were often deliberately taken against the wishes of the inhabitants to remain in close contact with their market town.

V.D. Lipman comments;

"The Acts of 1888 and 1894 established the existing

(i) (Report of the Poor Law Inspectors. op.cit.)

structure of local government and put an end to the overlapping of areas between authorities operating in the same field by rather arbitrary methods."⁽ⁱ⁾

And, he might have added, they succeeded in perpetuating the boundaries of the ancient counties which took no cognizance of the contemporary social geography of the country. The counties had been described by the same author as "the sphere of the carriage folk - the nobility and the gentry."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Perhaps that was the reason why the Parliaments of the late 19th century, and the members of the County Court of the Quarter Sessions (the county authority until 1888) were so loathe to see any alteration in their boundaries.

(i) (Lipman. V.D. op.cit. p.163)
(ii) (ibid. p.160)

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE MARKET TOWNS AND THEIR SPHERES OF INFLUENCE in 1900.

In chapter 2 of this section, when considering service provision in the county, one of the most significant features noted was the unequal distribution within the county of settlements with any marked degree of service facilities. It was there pointed out that the degree of service provision available in the settlements of a given market town's sphere of influence would have an important effect on the relationships between the town and the hinterland. At this stage it is imperative that the situation is examined in rather more detail so that the relationships between the several market towns and their respective hinterlands may be more fully comprehended.

In Fig. 42 are shown the hinterlands of the market towns and the distribution of service provision amongst the other settlements of the county. The hinterland boundaries are largely based on those determined in the examination of the transport facilities available to the several centres⁽¹⁾ but, in addition, certain other factors have been taken into consideration as far as some of the towns were concerned. For example, for four of the centres returns were available showing the extent of the catchment areas of the annual wool sales. These are illustrated in Fig. 43. The diagram indicates that, probably owing to the difficulties of transportation at the

(1) (See above. p. 307)

THE HINTERLANDS OF THE MARKET TOWNS IN 1900

SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICE PROVISION WITHIN THE HINTERLANDS.

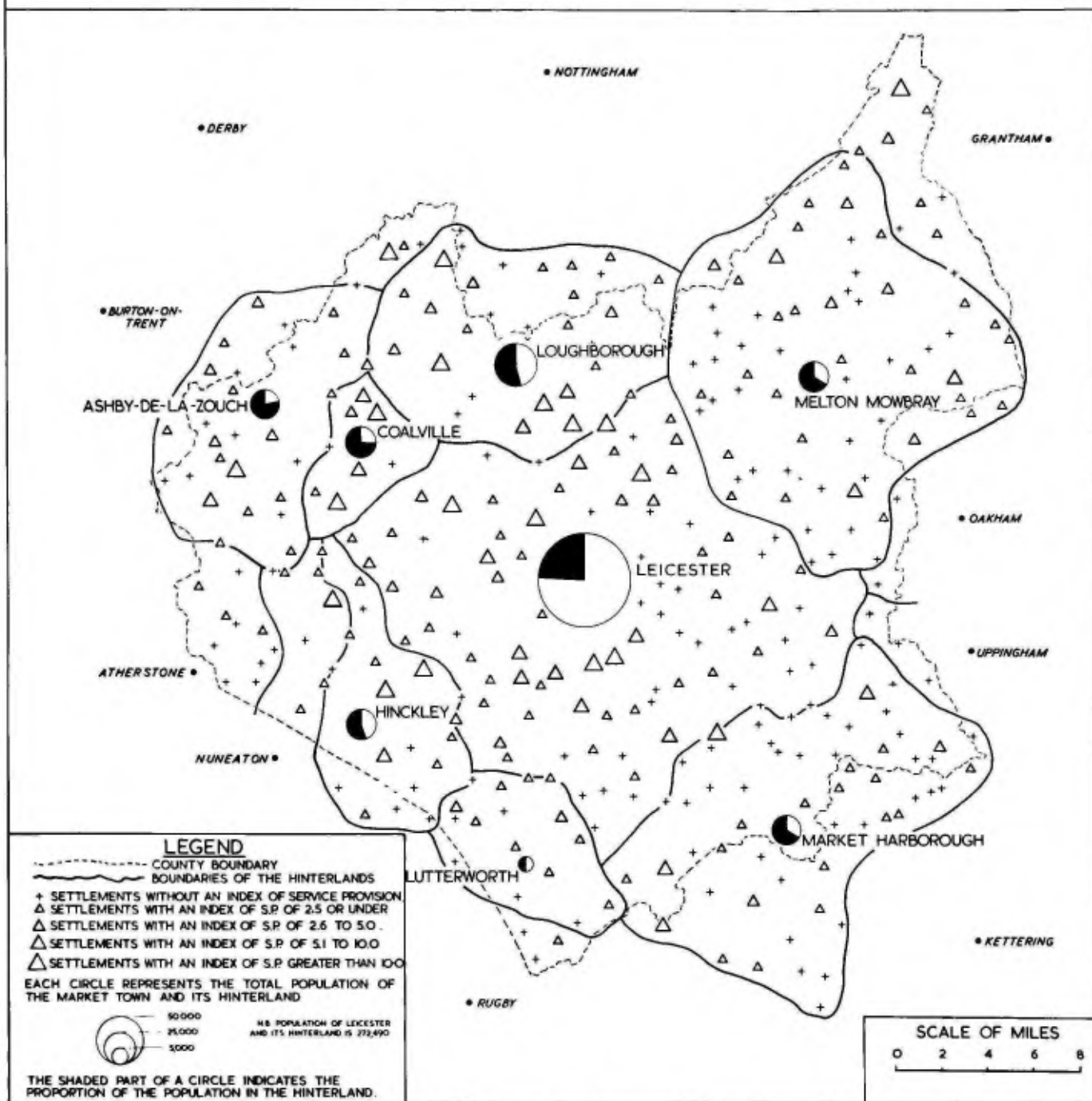


FIG. 42.

period, the use of the local market was still of importance. For instance, though Leicester market drew on rather a more extensive catchment area than the markets in the smaller centres, yet even the attraction of "a large number of big wool staplers who visit it from all parts of the kingdom"⁽ⁱ⁾ was insufficient incentive to persuade farmers residing in the neighbourhood of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Loughborough and Melton Mowbray to forsake the local market. Hence the catchment areas of the wool sales of the several towns served to delimit the local marketing areas. On Fig. 43, therefore, we have evidence of the hinterland boundaries between Leicester, Melton, Loughborough and Ashby.

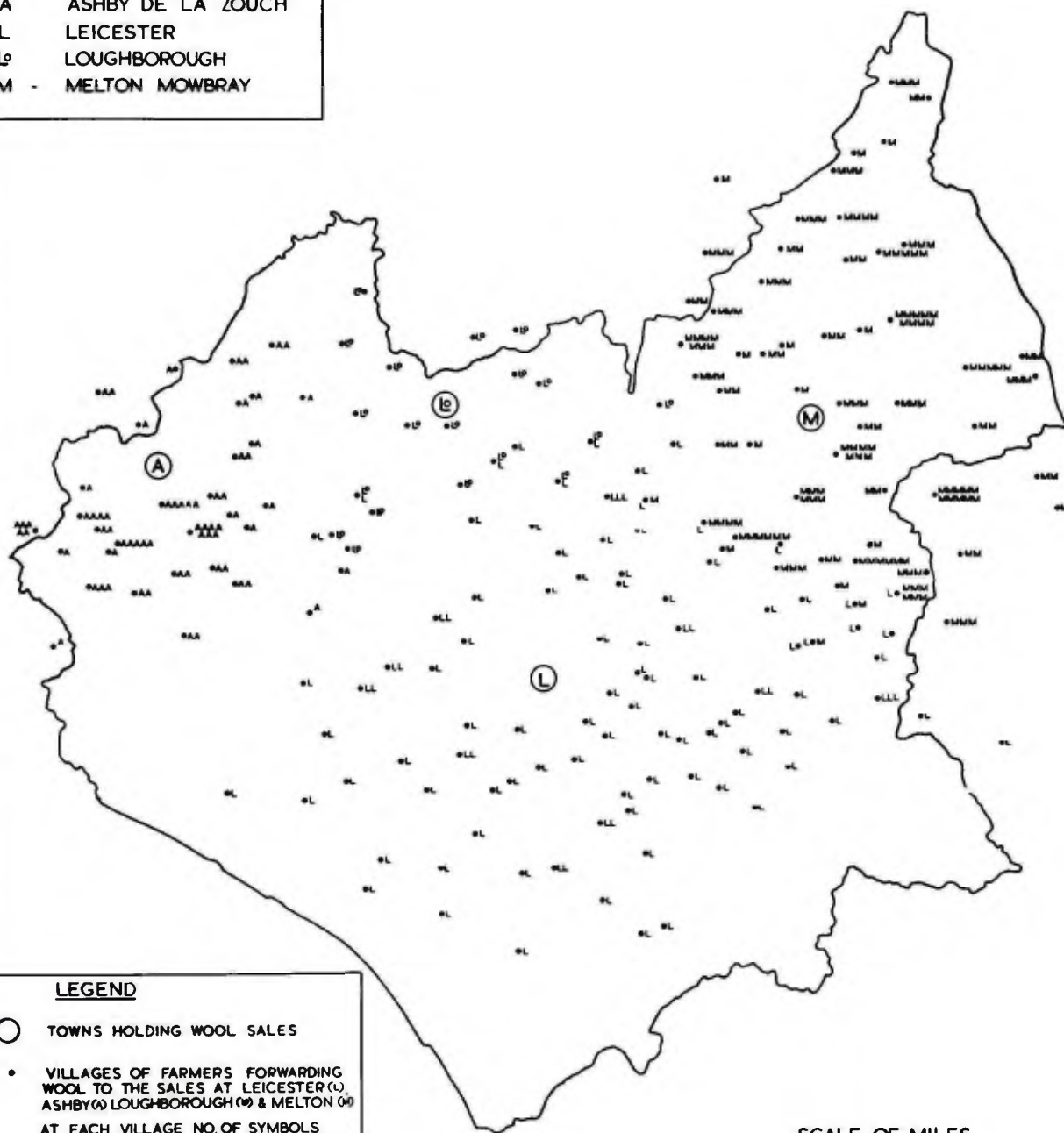
Secondly, an analysis of the circulation areas of local newspapers also provided an indication of the spheres of influence of the market towns. This analysis is illustrated in Fig. 44. Lutterworth and Ashby-de-la-Zouch were without local newspapers at this period, but in the case of the newspapers published in the other towns an examination of internal evidence - viz: local news reporting, distribution of agents and correspondence, etc. - has suggested the areas over which they mainly circulated.

Where available, therefore, these, and other less significant items of evidence of hinterland boundaries, have been considered in relation to the boundaries of the spheres of influence established by an examination of the transport

(i) (Leicester Journal. Report of annual wool fair. June 28th. 1900.)

LEICESTERSHIRE: WOOL SALES JUNE 1900

A ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH
L LEICESTER
L^o LOUGHBOROUGH
M - MELTON MOWBRAY



LEGEND

- TOWNS HOLDING WOOL SALES
- VILLAGES OF FARMERS FORWARDING WOOL TO THE SALES AT LEICESTER (L), ASHBY (A), LOUGHBOROUGH (L^o) & MELTON (M)
- AT EACH VILLAGE NO. OF SYMBOLS REPRESENTS NO. OF FARMERS SENDING A CONSIGNMENT TO THE RESPECTIVE SALES.

BASED ON REPORTS OF SALES IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS.

SCALE OF MILES



FIG. 43.

CIRCULATION AREAS OF NEWSPAPERS IN LEICESTERSHIRE 1900

BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF LOCAL NEWS REPORTING: JANUARY-JUNE.

CV. COALVILLE
HIN. HINCKLEY
LEI. LEICESTER
LOU. LOUGHBOROUGH
M.H. MARKET HARBOUROUGH
M.M. MELTON MOWBRAY

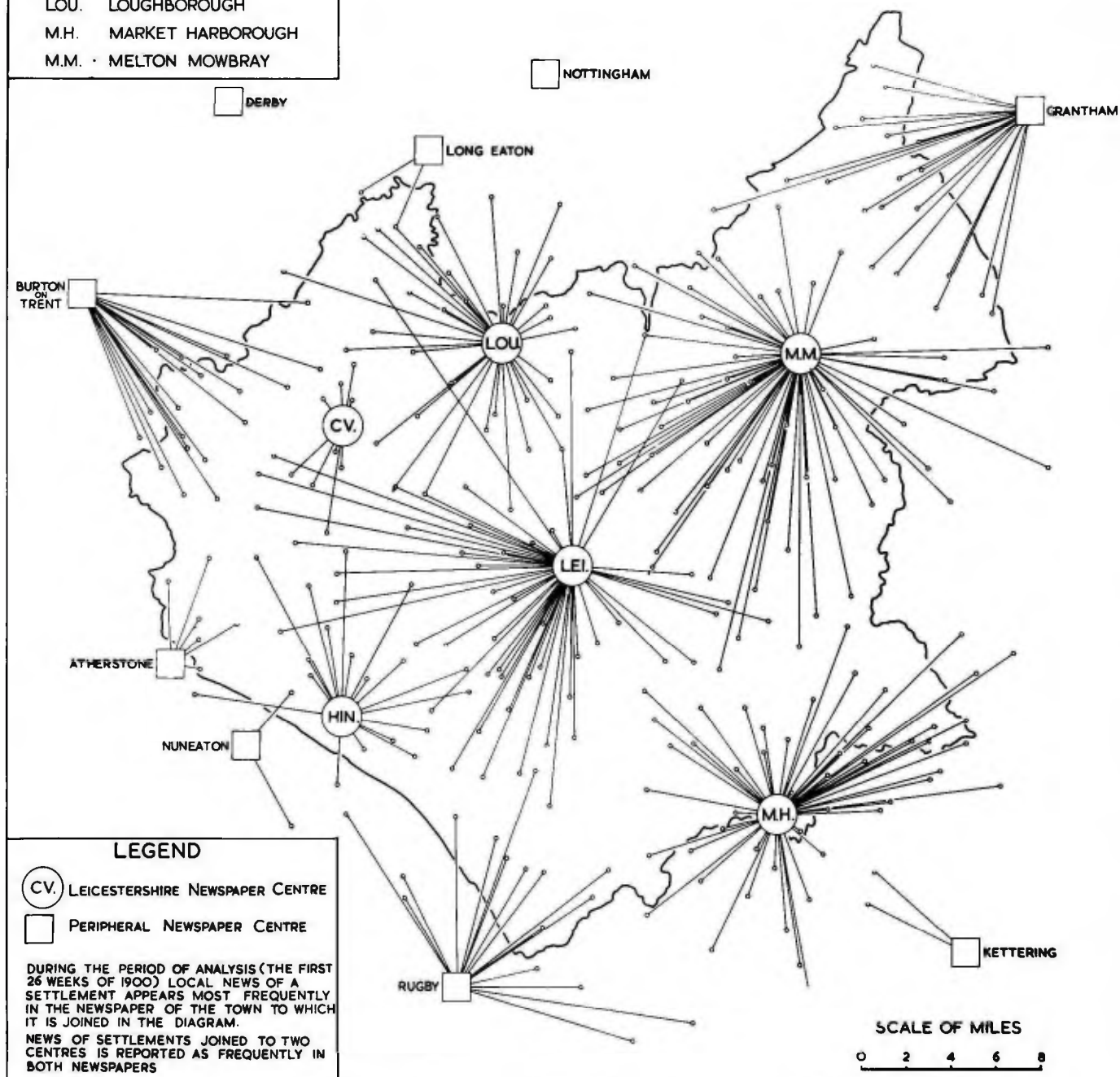


FIG. 4.2a

facilities. In most cases close correlation was found between the hinterland boundaries as determined by the several methods: as, for example, between the transport hinterland and the newspaper circulation area of Market Harborough; or, in determining the hinterland boundary between Melton and Leicester. In other instances, however, it seemed necessary to adjust the transport hinterland boundaries to some extent in order to take due cognizance of the other items of evidence available: as, for example, in determining the boundary between the hinterlands of Leicester and Loughborough.

In Figure 42, therefore, are delimited 'average' hinterlands of the market towns within each of which, it is suggested, the majority of the population would look to the centre for the majority of the weekly services. The boundaries of the hinterlands were not, of course, as rigid, or as watertight, as this method of delimitation suggests. Between each centre there would be a zone from which either of the two towns might be visited. This is clearly seen in parts of east Leicestershire, where, from certain villages, the wool sales at both Leicester and Melton Mowbray were used by the local farmers. And, of course, as pointed out in the previous chapter, transport facilities were available to more than one of the centres from a considerable number of the settlements in the county. Hence, the hinterlands as determined must not be regarded as mutually exclusive functional areas, but rather as areas within which the influence of the centre diminished as the periphery was

approached, and as competition from neighbouring centres began to make itself felt. These comments, of course, apply not only to the conditions pertaining in 1900 but also to those of both earlier and later analyses.

In attempting to assess the importance to a town of the service facilities which it provides for the population of its hinterland, there are many factors which must be taken into consideration. Firstly, the size of the hinterland both with reference to its area and, more important, to its population. The varying areas of the hinterlands of the Leicestershire towns are brought out in Fig. 42, ranging from the extensive area dependent upon Leicester down to the small area over which Coalville exercised the greatest influence. Table 20 shows the great variation in the populations of the hinterlands, with Leicester again in the lead (hinterland population of 61,000), and, at the other end of the scale, Lutterworth with but 17 places in its hinterland and having a total population of only 3,400. Coalville, the centre with the smallest hinterland as far as area was concerned, had over 17,000 inhabitants within its sphere of influence. Fig. 35 illustrates the high density of population around Coalville.

Secondly, the degree of service provision available in the settlements of the hinterlands influenced relations with the central towns. Where service facilities were available in the villages there would be a smaller degree of dependence on the central town. Service provision in the hinterlands is

illustrated on Fig. 42 and detailed in table 20. In the hinterland of Coalville there ~~was~~ only two settlements without an index of service provision. Each of the remaining 9 settlements had an index, and in the cases of Ibstock and Whitwick they were considerable ones. Both of these settlements had a sufficiently wide range of services to be regarded as subsidiary service centres (see Fig. 36). This was also true of the settlements of Hugglescote, Ellistown and Thringstone. Of the total service provision available in Coalville and its hinterland, only 46.2% was actually to be found in Coalville itself.

The position at Lutterworth was very different. Of the 17 settlements in the hinterland only a half of them had an index of service provision and in only one instance were more than three different services available. 78.5% of service provision in town and hinterland was found in Lutterworth.

With the exception of Leicester, whose position will be discussed later, service provision in the hinterlands of the towns, compared to that in the towns themselves fell between the extremes of Coalville and Lutterworth. The percentage in each case was almost identical ranging only from 61.2% in the case of Ashby to 65.9% in the case of Loughborough. However, the similarity of these average figures hides important variations in the availability of service provision in the hinterlands. In the case of Market Harborough, for example, only 24 settlements of the 61 in the hinterland - that is, less than 40% - had any index of S.P. and of these only Kibworth,

Table 20

Table showing the relationship between the Population and Service Provision of a town and that of its hinterland : 1900									
Town	Pop- ula- tion of the Town	Town's index of Service Prov- ision	Pop- ula- tion of its Hinter- land	No.of Settle- ments in the Hinter- land	No.of Settle- ments with an Index of Service Provi- sion	Total Service Prov- ision in Hinter- land	Percentage of Population of Town and Hinterland in the Town	Percentage of total Service Provision of Town and Hinterland in the Town	Percentage of Town's S.P. depend- ing on Hinterland Trade
Ashby-de- la-Zouch	4,726	93.0	16,677	33	18	59.25	22.5	61.2	63.3
Lutterworth	1,734	53.0	3,402	17	9	14.5	33.5	78.5	57.3
Mk.Harboro'	6,435	105.0	15,254	61	24	61.0	29.6	63.2	53.2
Melton Mowbray	7,454	123.0	16,941	69	35	66.75	30.6	64.7	52.7
Coalville	7,157	74.0	17,425	11	9	86.25	29.6	46.2	36.0
Loughborough	21,382	242.0	25,352	38	22	159.5	45.8	65.9	30.5
Hinckley	11,304	111.0	13,586	26	13	63.75	45.4	63.2	28.2
Leicester	211,579	2070.0	60,919	112	58	277.25	77.3	88.2	11.2

with an index of 13.5, had any range of facilities available. In the hinterland of Loughborough, on the other hand, 22 out of the 38 settlements - that is, about 60% - had an index of S.P., and moreover, in several cases they were quite significant ones, as, for example, at Shepshed with an index of S.P. of 51.0, or Kegworth, with an index of 32.0. In the hinterlands of both Melton and Hinckley about half the settlements had some index of S.P. However, the 13 settlements concerned in the hinterland of Hinckley had S.P. almost equivalent to that of the 34 settlements concerned in Melton's hinterland - viz: 63.75 compared with 66.75.

Hinckley and Loughborough both included within their hinterlands a number of the urban villages, referred to in Chapter 2, and which had developed a considerable number of service facilities in order to meet the needs of the locally resident industrial populations. These urban villages were absent from the hinterlands of Melton and Market Harborough and the settlements with service provision usually had only the basic neighbourhood services of grocer, and/or tailor, and/or boot and shoe repairer.

Thirdly, the population of the central settlement affected its degree of dependence on hinterland trade. In all cases except one the hinterland population exceeded that of the town. This was most notably so in the case of Ashby-de-la-Zouch where there were three and a half times as many people in the hinterland as in the town. In the cases of Loughborough

and Hinckley the populations were much more nearly equal and thus, the process which we earlier noted for the first half of the 19th century, when the growth in the town population exceeded the growth in the hinterland population, had continued throughout the second half of the century.⁽ⁱ⁾

It was in the case of Leicester that this process had been most pronounced. By 1900 the city's population had risen to 211,579 - amounting to almost 50% of the total population of the whole of the county. Its hinterland though having a population 250% greater than that of any other town's hinterland was less than one third as populous as the city. In this instance, it is singularly clear to appreciate that the service provision in the city of Leicester was primarily concerned with meeting the needs of the locally resident population. This factor, of course, very largely accounted for the very high percentage (88.2) of service provision of city and hinterland actually found within the city.

In assessing the importance of the hinterland trade to a central settlement there were, therefore, the following variable factors to be taken into account; the population of the town; the population of the hinterland; service provision in the town; service provision in the hinterland. These various factors are set out in table 20, the final column of which expresses as a percentage of total trade, that which arose from contact with the hinterland. For example, in the case of Ashby-de-la-Zouch we note that 22.5% of the population of the

(i) (See above. p. 91 and p. 231 for details of the situation at the earlier dates.)

town plus the hinterland was resident in the town; on the other hand 61.2% of the total service provision of town and hinterland was found in the town. Thus, in the town there was surplus service provision amounting to $61.2\% - 22.5\% = 38.7\%$, utilised by the population of the hinterland of the town. Expressed as a percentage of the S.P. found in Ashby we obtain a result which indicates the percentage of Ashby's service provision which was provided for the benefit of, and because of, the hinterland population. As Table 20 shows this percentage was 63.3. It indicates that almost two-thirds of the service provision in Ashby was related to the use made of the town by the hinterland population of 16,667, and only one-third to the services required by the locally resident population of 4726. However the town population was rather more important in utilising S.P. in Ashby than a quick comparison of the town population and the hinterland population would suggest. The latter was $3\frac{1}{2}$ times the former but it made less proportionate use, on an average, of Ashby's S.P. because there were some service facilities available in the settlements of the hinterland.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch depended on hinterland trade to a greater extent than any of the other central settlements. This would largely appear to have been due to the virtual absence of service provision in the rapidly expanding settlements to the west of the town. As a result of the development of coal mining in the district a new settlement of Moira had grown up since

1851, and by the beginning of the 20th century its population was almost 1,500; its service facilities, however, were limited to but a grocer and a general shopkeeper. The parish of Oakthorpe and Donisthorpe had expanded from a population of 982 in 1851, to 2,048 in 1901 but the two settlements had indices of only 2.5 and 5.0 respectively. The population of Woodville, another new settlement just over the Derbyshire county boundary, had reached a figure of over 2,500 by the turn of the century, yet its index of service provision was only 5.0 - theoretically the average for a settlement of about 600 inhabitants. Thus the populations of these, and other, large mining villages were largely dependent on Ashby-de-la-Zouch for their service facilities. Unlike the urban manufacturing villages of the Soar valley - for example, Barrow, Quorn, Sileby - the development of service provision had not followed on the expansion of the population. The linear settlement pattern of the mining area was perhaps the main feature contributing to this phenomenon, for such a pattern made impossible the development of a convenient shopping centre and, in addition, a dispersed population of this nature would possibly give the appearance of not being sufficiently numerous to justify individual enterprises starting retailing or servicing establishments. In the Soar Valley, where the settlements were very strongly nucleated, neither of these factors would operate. Indeed as they were all anciently established villages the main street would obviously present an ideal location for the

development of shops, etc.

A further factor which made Ashby so dependent on hinterland trade was the failure of the town's population to expand. From 1851 to 1901 the population of the town only increased from 3762 to 4726 - a 25% increase only, compared with population increases of from 75% to 200% in the cases of the other market towns of the county (with the exception of Lutterworth). The census returns of 1901 did not give details of employment in Ashby-de-la-Zouch but contemporary evidence suggests that manufacturing industry continued to be of but minor significance in the life of the town. Only one factory was shown on the 1901 edition of the ~~0.5~~ 25 inch plan of the town, and in a book published in 1907, it was recorded:

"At present the town lives upon the surrounding country to which it acts as a distributor....The last half of the 19th century was one of immunity from building.....In the matter of trade Ashby could challenge any other town to produce a better supply of the necessaries of life."⁽ⁱ⁾

This lack of development of the town meant a much larger degree of dependence on the trade of the hinterland than, for example, in the case of Loughborough where, between 1851 and 1901, the population of the town had expanded from 10,900 to 21,382, with a resultant increase in local trade.

Lutterworth depended to but a little less extent on hinterland trade than did Ashby-de-la-Zouch but, in this case, as suggested

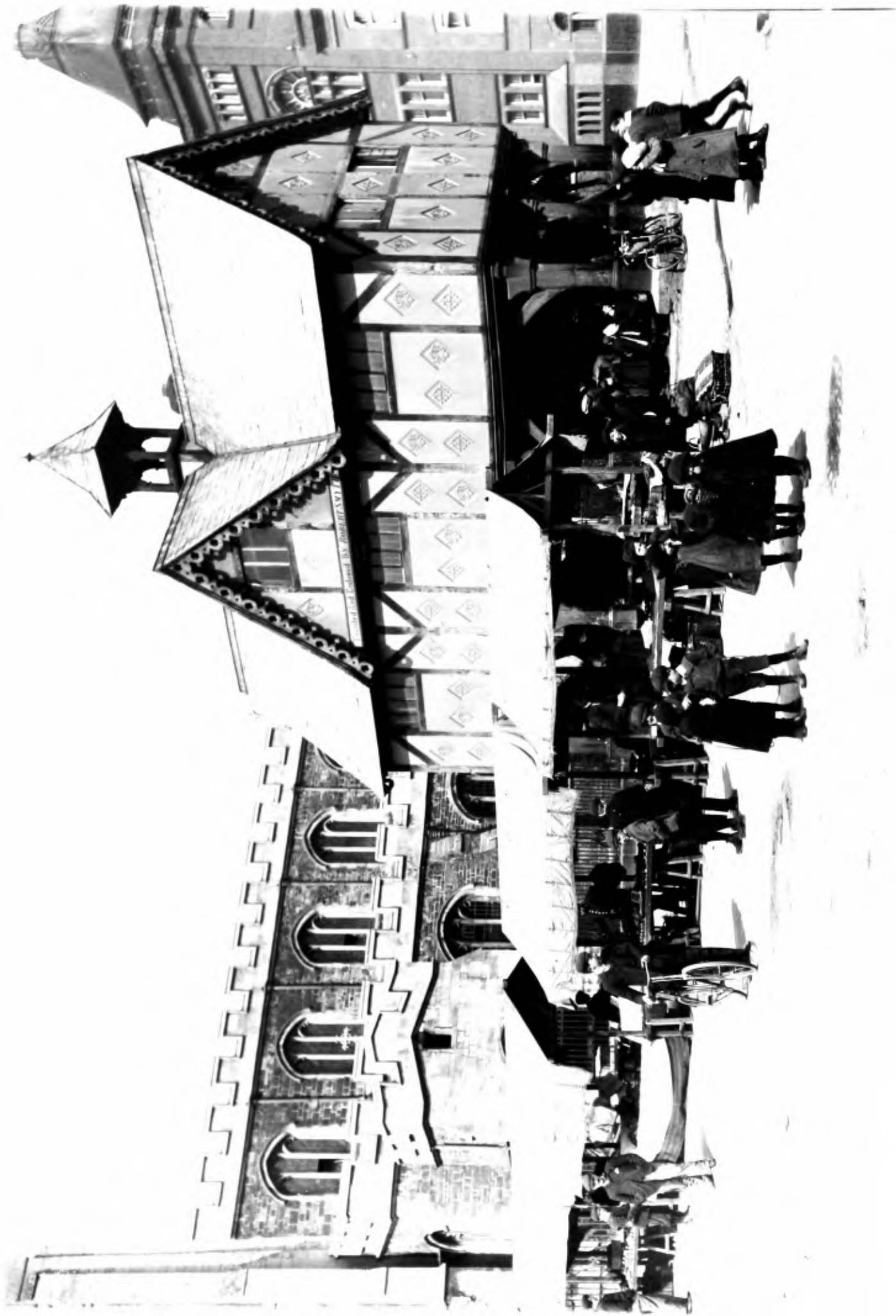
(i) (Scott W. The Story of Ashby de la Zouch. Ashby 1907. p.248.)



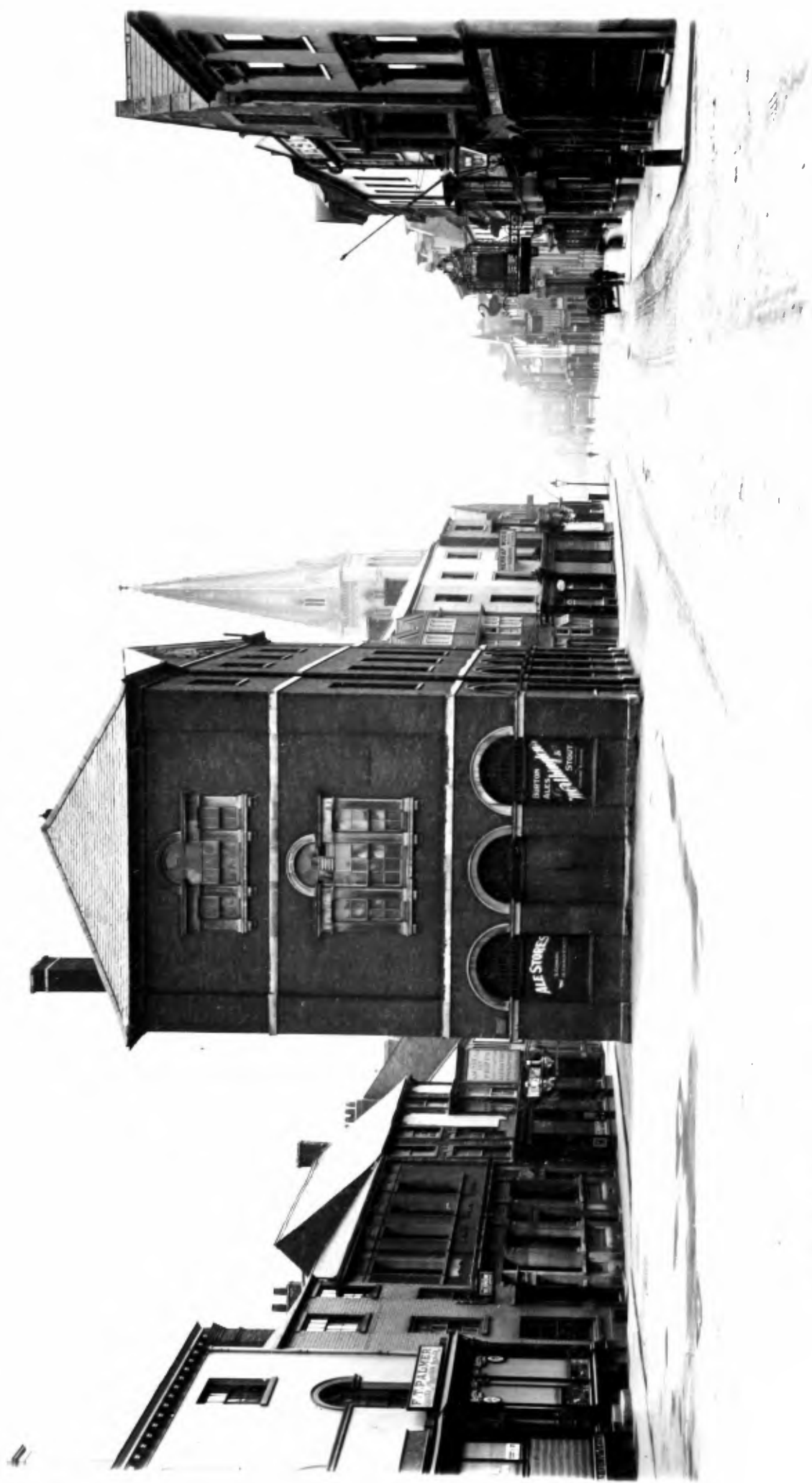
High Street, Butterworth, in 1900

earlier in the chapter, the main factor involved was the lack of alternative service facilities in the settlements of the hinterland. This, however, was not surprising for, as shown in table 20, the 17 settlements in the hinterland had an average population of only 200 and were thus too small to support service provision.

Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray each depended on their hinterland for half their trade. Their hinterlands had populations almost equal in size and, moreover, the average size of each settlement in each hinterland was about 250. In neither hinterland had there been any large scale expansion of population as a result of industrialisation. Only at Asfordby, immediately to the west of Melton, where an iron and steel works had been built some years earlier, and at Kibworth and Fleckney in the northern part of the hinterland of Market Harborough, and in which villages some development of the hosiery industry had taken place, was industry of any importance. Elsewhere the settlements were agricultural. Service provision amongst the agricultural settlements tended to be concentrated in certain villages which acted as local centres. Examples were seen in the hinterland of Market Harborough at Clipstone, Welford and Hallaton, and at Wymondham, Somerby, Long Clawson and Scalford in the hinterland of Melton. (see Fig. 42). On the whole, however, even in these settlements only neighbourhood services such as grocers, tailors, boot and shoe repairers, and drapers were to be found and hence for the more specialised



The Market Place, Market Harborough, in 1900



The High Street, Market Harborough, in 1900 (looking South).
The Old Town Hall and Butchers' Chambers in centre foreground.



The High Street, Market Harborough, in 1900. (looking North)

shops and other services there was an absolute dependence on the central town.

However the towns' dependence on hinterland trade had been reduced to some extent by the late 19th century development of their own populations. At Melton Mowbray the population had increased from 4391 to 7454 in 1901; at Market Harborough the increase appeared to have been even greater from 2325 to 6435, but, as we saw in an earlier chapter, the population of the town had been rather under-evaluated in 1851 because of the development of building outside the chapelry boundary.⁽ⁱ⁾ By 1901 the boundaries had been revised to include the whole of the town within the one enumeration area.

In both towns manufacturing industry had developed. Unfortunately, the statistics of occupations in the towns given in the 1901 census returns make impossible an assessment of the percentage of occupied people working in industry. Hosiery, engineering, and boot and shoe factories were working in both of the towns, employing 156 workers in Market Harborough, and 269 in Melton Mowbray. In addition, of course, Melton continued to be of importance as the centre for the 'Hunt'; this being of considerable benefit to the trade of the town.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The development of Coalville as a service centre was discussed in Chapter 2.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ From table 20 we can see that hinterland trade accounted for about one third of the total. The availability of service provision in the settlements within

(i) { See above. p. 237 }
(ii) { See above. p. 263 }
(iii) { See above. p. 296. }

the hinterland is an indication of Coalville's incomplete development as a 'fully-fledged' central settlement. The fact that five of the villages in the hinterland had a sufficiently wide range of service facilities to be classed as subsidiary service centres has already been pointed out. Six settlements in the hinterland had populations of more than 1,000 (including two - viz: Ibstock and Whitwick - with more than 4,000). In the 50 years since the middle of the 19th century the populations of these settlements had more than doubled from a total of 7,158 to a total of 15,021. These population increases were related to the rapid expansion of coal-mining, but the development of settlement took place not around the pit heads (except in the case of Coalville itself), but rather as additions to settlements already in existence. Whitwick, Thringstone, Ibstock and Hugglescote, etc., for example, were anciently established village communities. Therefore, as in the case of the manufacturing villages in the Soar Valley, the main streets of the villages, as the centres of the population nucleations, provided convenient places for the development of service facilities.

Only Coalville grew up as a new settlement located around two pit heads, and at the centre of railway facilities in the district.⁽ⁱ⁾ The juxtaposition of railway station and cross roads, however, provided a 'natural' centre for the growing settlement and it was in this centre that retailing and other

(i) (See above. p. 314)

service facilities began to develop. By 1866 a retail market was being held between the station and the cross roads.⁽ⁱ⁾ Markets were also being held at Hugglescote and Whitwick at this time⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ epitomising the division of service provision within the hinterland. However, these latter markets died out at the beginning of the 20th century⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ and left the Friday market at Coalville free from local competition, so that it was able to expand to serve not only the needs of the local population but also the needs of those entering the town by rail and road. The importance of the marketing facilities to the town at this date is shown in the local council's willingness to expend £15,000 on the erection of new market buildings.^(iv)

By 1900, a stock market had also developed at Coalville (in 1886 stock sales had been held at Hugglescote), and was attracting support from quite a wide area. For example, at the annual Christmas show and sale of fat stock in 1900 it was reported that:

"There was a large entry, the stock which changed hands comprising about 70 beasts, 120 sheep, 15 calves, 50 pigs, and nearly 3,000 head of poultry. The sale was largely attended....two selling rings being kept busy."^(v)

The list of prize winners for this sale showed that the entries were received from villages up to a distance of six miles away.

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- (i) (Market Rights and Tolls. Returns to the House of Commons. 26th February. 1886.)
(ii) (ibid)
(iii) (Wright's and Kelly's Directories of Leicestershire. 1900; 1904; 1908; 1912; 1916)
(iv) (Report in the Coalville Times. March 23rd. 1900)
(v) (Report in the Coalville Times. December 21st. 1900)

At a sale in May of the same year, even larger numbers of animals had passed through the market. Moreover, the entries then included some store stock, indicating that the market was not only concerned with supplying the local butchers with fat stock for slaughter.

The conversion of cottages and houses around the cross roads into retailing and servicing establishments; the opening of three banks in the same area between 1877 and 1900; the construction of a new post office on one of the corners of the cross roads; the completion, in 1910, of a theatre to seat 1000 people, at a cost of £2,500; and the development of the central trading facilities of the Coalville Co-operative Society (to which more detailed reference will be made in the next section), in 1905 and 1916;- all these factors contributed to the development of Coalville as a central settlement about the turn of the century. Service provision, especially as far as the professional services and the specialised retail shops were concerned, became concentrated at Coalville, from where a clientele of some 25,000 could be served, and thus, although in 1900 a good deal of service provision was scattered in the settlements of the hinterland, yet the town had achieved a leading position in the district by virtue of its location at rail-head and midway between the expanding settlements to north and south.

Loughborough and Hinckley may be examined simultaneously for they both stood in similar relationships to their respective

hinterlands. As Fig. 42 shows, within each hinterland there were many settlements with a considerable degree of service provision: in the hinterland of Loughborough, in particular, including most of the Soar valley industrial villages to which reference has been made on previous occasions. Within Loughborough's hinterland the settlements' indices of S.P. totalled 159.5, and in Hinckley's, 63.75, representing about 35% of the total in town and hinterland in each case. Moreover, the two hinterlands contained a rather lower percentage of the total population of town and hinterland than in any of the other instances which we have examined. This was not due to the small populations - Loughborough's hinterland was more populous than any other in the county except Leicester's - but to the larger populations of the central towns themselves. Loughborough's population of 21,382 was more than twice that of 1851, and the population of Hinckley in the same period had increased from 6,000 to 11,000. The increases in both cases were the results of industrialisation. In 1901 there were 1200 employed in engineering and 700 in textiles in Loughborough; in Hinckley there were almost 1000 in textiles and 800 in the boot and shoe industry. Hence service provision in both towns was oriented towards meeting the needs of the locally resident population, and dependence on hinterland trade was only 30% in the case of Loughborough and 28% in the case of Hinckley.

This statistical analysis of the value of the hinterland trade to the two towns hides, however, a marked difference

between them as central service settlements. Loughborough's importance as a marketing town had been maintained during the latter part of the 19th century. A comparison of the hinterland of the town in 1900 (see Fig. 42) with that for the middle of the century (see Fig. 26), will show that the former was as extensive as the latter. Hinckley, however, had suffered a marked decline in importance. We noted, in a previous chapter, the growing influence of Nuneaton in the area to the west of Hinckley, as a result of the opening of the Ashby and Nuneaton railway.⁽ⁱ⁾

At Loughborough the cattle market was purchased by the local board in 1868 and removed from the streets of the town. With the opening of a new market place it was decided that two markets should be held weekly - a fat stock sale on Mondays and a sale of stores of Thursdays. Both proved to be successful. The retail market, formerly held on Thursdays only, had also become of importance on the Saturday by 1888.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Thus on three days of the week the trade of Loughborough was stimulated by the attraction of the markets. The markets resulted in an income of no less than £500 per annum to the Corporation.

In contrast, the market at Hinckley was apparently almost dead. In 1888 the market was held 'on Mondays and Saturdays for drapery and haberdashery, grocery, fruit, fish, crockery, earthenware and ironmongery.'⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ No report was made of any

(i) (See above. p.308.311.)

(ii) (Minutes of Evidence given before the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls. 13th December. 1888. Report of 1890/1. p. 8.)

(iii) (ibid. Vol.13. part 2. p.304)

marketing of livestock although this could not have died out altogether for, in 1900, there were newspaper advertisements concerning it. However, the local newspaper, at the same period, also spoke of the 'decay of the Hinckley market' and of 'the want of trade in connection with the retail businesses of the town'. The paper instances several reasons for the decline of Hinckley as a trading centre, coupled with the rising importance of Nuneaton.

"Nuneaton stock sales are better patronised than our own local sales by Hinckley traders. Nuneaton market being held on a Saturday, when the industrial classes have just received their weekly wages, and Hinckley market being on Mondays is of advantage to the neighbouring town.... The circulation of Nuneaton tradesmen's advertisements in Hinckley and this at the expense of Hinckley traders themselves is another factor to bring the Hinckley tradesman nearer the inevitable time when he will have to close and go to Nuneaton in search of the trade he has lost. What Hinckley needs at the present time seems to be a bit more jealous regard for the welfare of our own town and locality." (i)

Thus, in addition to losing part of its hinterland as a result of the changed pattern of communications, trade from the town and district was also being lost to Nuneaton. It had apparently been suggested that Hinckley's market day should be changed to Friday or Saturday, and the newspaper commented:

(i) (Editorial in the Hinckley Times, October 20th. 1900)

"There could not be much lost by a trial for the proportions of Hinckley market on a Monday are so diminished that we shall soon be forgetting that Hinckley was once a market town, and have to lament that it has now become an industrial village with Nuneaton for its post town and trading centre." (i)

Table 20 reveals that the hinterland trade of Leicester only accounted for about one-tenth of the service provision available. As indicated earlier in the chapter, Leicester's population outnumbered that of its hinterland by more than 3 to 1, and thus service provision in the city would be most concerned with meeting local needs. In addition, however, within the hinterland there were more than half of the settlements with an index of service provision, and in some cases they possessed a considerable range of services. It was only in the area of small nucleated settlements to the east of the city that the population was more or less entirely dependent on Leicester for all types of service provision, including the 'neighbourhood' services. Elsewhere the development of residential and urban villages, especially to the south and the south-west of the city, had enabled local enterprises to make progress. The combination of these two factors made Leicester's trade with its hinterland of but minor importance to the city. However, it should be borne in mind that the 11% hinterland trade at Leicester theoretically accounted for an index of S.P. of 231.8;

(i) (ibid.)

an index in excess of that for any other settlement in the county, with the exception of Loughborough. Thus, although to Leicester the hinterland trade was of but relatively small importance it did nevertheless represent an amount of trade greatly in excess of that gained by any other town from its hinterland.

Finally in table 20A service provision in town and hinterland is related to the population in each of the functional areas. With the exception of Lutterworth and Coalville, the average range of service provision available per 1000 of the population ranged only from 7.0 to 8.6. In the case of Hinckley the rather low figure may have been a reflection of the town's declining importance as a result of the severe competition from nearby Nuneaton; and as far as Ashby-de-la-Zouch was concerned the increase in service provision had probably failed to keep pace with the rapidly expanding population of the hinterland.

In the case of Lutterworth the extremely high figure suggests some extraordinary factor at work. It can be related to the low population of both town and hinterland. In both 1800, and in the middle of the 19th century, the hinterland of Lutterworth had been both more extensive and more populous. The hinterland populations at these two earlier dates had been 8818 and 9607 respectively, compared with only 3400 in 1900. Parts of the former hinterland had been lost to Leicester, Market Harborough, and Rugby (see Figs. 40 and 26) but, even in

Table 20a

Average Service Provision in the Towns plus their hinter-lands			
Town	Total Population of town plus Hinterland	Total Service Provision in town plus Hinterland	Service Provision per 1000 of the Population
Lutterworth	5136	67.5	13.1
Leicester	272498	2347.25	8.6
Loughborough	46734	401.5	8.6
Melton Mowbray	24395	189.75	7.8
Market Harborough	21689	166.0	7.6
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	21403	152.25	7.2
Hinckley	24890	173.75	7.0
Coalville	24582	160.25	6.5

the hinterland area remaining in 1900 the populations of the settlements had declined very considerably between 1851 and 1900. For example, Gillmorton declined in population from 899 to 512; Bitteswell from 474 to 324; Misterton from 589 to 441; and South Kilworth from 509 to 294.

Between the same dates the town's population had declined by 29% from 2446 to 1734, partly reflecting the diminished functions of the town as a service centre with no alternative opportunities for employment available, as industry was not established in the town (due in part to the lack of rail communication and in part to the successful attempts of the local gentry, etc. to keep it away). The fall in population of town and hinterland had not been matched by an equal fall in the service provision available. Some decrease took place as evidenced by the decline in the town's index of S.P. from 80.0 to 53.0 (although the two indices were not directly comparable the fall was significant enough to show the general trend), but in other instances a fall in business would not automatically result in a retailing establishment closing. An individual entrepreneur would have sought other methods of remaining in business; for example in reducing the number of staffs employed; or in extending the line of sales in an attempt to secure a greater turnover. And with those engaged in the professional services a fall in business would hit each one more or less equally hard, perhaps resulting in a 10% lower income all round, rather than driving one or two out of business altogether. A

falling income amongst the professional people would lead only to a delayed movement away from the town, or perhaps rather a failure to replace a service when one was terminated by death or retirement. On these two counts, therefore, there would have been a tendency for the amount of service ^{provision} ~~population~~ available in the town to remain rather higher than the lower population, with a resultant falling trade, would need or demand. It is suggested that this factor was the cause of the high degree of service provision per 1000 of the population in Lutterworth and its hinterland.

The low figure per 1000 of the population in the hinterland of Coalville may be correlated with factors operating in exactly the opposite direction. The latter half of the 19th century saw a rapid increase in the population of the area within the hinterland of Coalville in 1900. The population of the town plus the hinterland in 1900 was 24,582; the population of the same area in 1851 had been only 8671: an increase of almost 300%. In this instance the opening of new retailing and service establishments would have failed to keep pace with the demand created, and hence Coalville's index of S.P. would tend to be lower than the size of the population justified. As indicated earlier in the chapter, however, the first decade of the 20th. century was a period of rapid expansion in the trading functions of the town, and hence, the sub-standard service provision marked but a temporary stage in the development of Coalville.